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The Man Who Was Not a Colonel

THE MAN

WHO WAS NOT A COLONEL.

BY

A HIGH PRIVATE.

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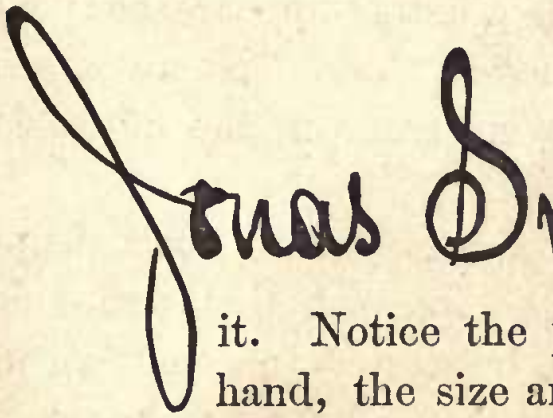
THE MAN WHO WAS NOT A COLONEL.

CHAPTER I.

JONAS SMITH.



THAT was his name, and that was the way in which he wrote it. Notice the peculiar character of the backhand, the size and blackness of the letters, the swing to the *J*, and the curve of the *S*. Don't you think all that gives an appearance of importance to the name, like unto that which attaches to the giant signature of John Hopkins, which towers over all others in our glorious Declaration? Don't you know that, without the backhand, and the size of the letters, and the swing, and the curve, the above name would not be at all noticeable? Even if you are a Smith, you must admit that there is nothing distinguished or romantic about your name; that the immense family to which you belong has managed, somehow or other, to turn

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out very few great men; and haven't you felt that your parents, in imposing upon you that name (against their wills perhaps) were very lax indeed in their duty, if they failed to give you a front name (over which they had complete control) which might compensate for the unpleasantness of your family name?

Now our hero (I despise mysteries, and therefore tell you at once whom I am presenting to you) was well aware of the estimation in which his family name was held by the community in general, and was quite as well aware that his Christian name did not improve the matter. If he had been called Alexander, or Sidney, or Algernon, perhaps the name as a whole would have made a better appearance; but Jonas, — bah! it was almost as bad as John. Now you can understand why our hero wrote his name in the aforesaid peculiar manner.

Don't imagine that our friend Jonas was an affected upstart, because, if you should start out with that notion in your cranium, much time might be wasted in removing it. He was not of that sort at all; on the other hand, he was a clever, good-hearted fellow, with simple tastes and manners. Let me introduce him to you. He was a medium-sized, broad-shouldered young fellow, about twenty-six or seven years of age; his features were tolerably well marked; his eyes, dark gray in color, had a habit of looking you straight in the face, as if they had no fear of your reading anything wrong in their depths; and his mustache and hair were chestnut in color. That's a skeleton merely; you must let imagination do its duty, and place the flesh on the bones.

Our hero was a lawyer by trade, — there, I am compelled to apologize at once for that word. Of course I might erase it, but I have resolved to write this story *currente calamo*, and so I must apologize. Instead of trade, I should have said profession, for it seems that the man who builds a house or a piano has a trade, while a man who uses books for tools, and presents paper covered with writing as his handiwork, is a member of a profession. Ah, well! I bow to general opinion, and respect the mysteries of words. Our hero, then, was a lawyer by profession, — a young lawyer. Did you ever study that *lusus naturæ*, a young lawyer? Not the kind that you find in novels, but the real genuine, simon-pure article? Of course, I am well aware that in novels there is put into the hands of a young lawyer, as soon as he is admitted to the bar, some important case, which he tries (if the novelist is to be believed) in a manner that would cause old practitioners to explode with laughter. Of course he is successful, and of course business flows in upon him. Well, it isn't that kind of a lawyer that I desire to introduce to you. In real life the young lawyer is allowed by his friends to struggle with their petty business, and is very fortunate if he can revel in suits on promissory notes.

Our friend Jonas had picked up a fair amount of legal business, enough to provide him with means of subsistence, and something over; his prospects were tolerably fair, and, considering his age, he was well on his way to the position of Chief Justice of the United States, which, I suppose, must be the goal of every lawyer's ambition, because it is well known that that place is given for merit, — except of

course in those few cases, where it has gone to an incumbent on the ground on which maidens are popularly supposed to distribute their kisses, *i. e.*, by favor.

Jonas probably burned some midnight oil (I believe that is the regulation thing to do in the profession), but not enough to hurt him, and he managed to find time to make himself quite a favorite in the set in which he moved socially. He was decidedly fond of society; but, though he had flirted on the edge of the love-precipice several times, he had never tumbled over, and so, at the time he is presented to you, that piece of internal furniture, which he called his heart, was still safe and sound.

CHAPTER II.

HOW COLONELS WERE MADE.

DOUBTLESS most of you are familiar with the story of the man who entered a bar-room in the West, which was full of loungers, and remarked, "Major, will you take a drink?" and who was astonished when he saw every man in the room march up to the bar; but old stories must be resuscitated whenever they will point a moral or adorn a tale.

Prior to the war there were undoubtedly many gentlemen, in this great land, who bore military titles acquired in a manner which would not bear examination much better than

will the medical diplomas issued by a certain Philadelphia University. The war was a piece of good fortune to gentlemen who wore supposititious military titles. When about every third man you met was honestly entitled to be called general, or colonel, or major, you never suspected that any one's military title was obtained in a surreptitious manner. In order, however, that I may not impose upon your credulity, I propose to tell you exactly how Jonas Smith acquired the title of colonel, which he wore.

Did you ever examine any young lawyer's office? No? Let me introduce you then to one, at once. The process of getting one up in a proper shape is very simple. An old lawyer, who possesses a library, hires a large room or a suite of rooms. If it is one room, that is divided off into cubby-holes by wooden partitions; if it is a suite, it consists usually of one large room and several very small ones. The old lawyer occupies the largest cubby-hole, and rents out the rest of them to young lawyers. In his cubby-hole the young lawyer puts a desk, a chair for himself, and a chair for the expected client. If a client happens to appear he is led into the young lawyer's private office, *i. e.*, the aforesaid cubby-hole, and the people in the next cubby-hole are let into the client's secrets as rapidly as the lawyer, whom he is consulting, is.

This system is, of course, open to certain objections, but it has its compensations. It is cheap; it enables the neophytes to aid each other; and it leads to much fun and good fellowship. All knowledge of law is not acquired from rusty books; the rubbing of minds together puts many ideas into

the heads of the owners of those minds, and helping some one else is almost as good as working for yourself; not quite as good, because the human mind is so constituted that it hankers after shekels, when it has done work.

Jonas Smith's office was organized upon the above-mentioned plan. The head of the office was an old fellow, who had been at one time a justice of the peace, and had thus acquired the title of judge. He was a short, fat, round-faced, jolly old fellow, who liked nothing better than to assemble a party in the main room, and to indulge in queer stories and sly jokes. No matter how friendly he was with any one, that person was a proper subject in his eyes to put his stories or jokes on.

One day, when two of the intimate friends of Jonas were sitting with that gentleman in the main office, enjoying a social chat, the judge came from his own sanctum, placed himself in front of the stove, and waited for an opportunity to join in the conversation. Jonas noticed a sly twinkle in the old fellow's eye, and, suspecting that he had some good story on hand, remarked: —

"Well, judge, what is it?"

"I was thinking," said the judge, "of your name."

"My name?" said Jonas, rather sharply, for that was his tender point.

"Yes," said the judge, as calmly as if he supposed Jonas was very proud of his cognomen. "Do you know that I never met but one Jonas Smith besides you?"

"Ah, indeed," said Jonas, a little sarcastically; "who was the gentleman?"

"Well," said the judge very sedately, "he was quite a distinguished man. He was colonel of the militia up in the country, where I was brought up."

"Quite an important position," said Jonas, sneeringly.

"So he thought," replied the judge. "On training days he would get as drunk as an owl, and wobble about on his horse like a boat without a rudder. Everybody used to roar at him. But perhaps he was one of your relatives," added the judge, slyly.

"No," said Jonas, contemptuously, "I hope not."

"Well," said the judge, as he retired to his sanctum, "Colonel Jonas was a very good fellow, when he was sober."

Jonas' friends noticed that the judge's story had irritated our hero, and so they took special pains, when they left the office, to bid him good-by as Colonel Jonas Smith.

From that day the *nom de guerre*, I suppose it should be called, spread rapidly among all the acquaintances of Jonas, and it stuck to him so effectually that he answered to it as readily as he did to his own name. New acquaintances heard it from his intimate friends, and, supposing that it was an honest title, imagined that he would be offended if they did not call him colonel. Thus the nickname became so thoroughly fastened on our hero that, after a short time, he felt no astonishment when addressed as a military gentleman, and no compunctions in answering to the title.

In explanation of the general belief that our hero was really a military man, it must be borne in mind that the war of the rebellion had been finished but a short time, and brigadier generals — to say nothing of colonels — were as

thick as blackberries. How was a stranger to know that Mr. Jonas Smith had received his military title in a surreptitious manner? Military titles were so cheap that no one would dream that any special one was not legitimate.

Fortunately not many of the acquaintances of Jonas were military men, except several members of a militia regiment.

The latter, however, could not very well object to his assumption of such a nickname, because every militia officer feels in his heart of hearts that, no matter how bravely he may carry his head on parade, there is nothing very substantial about his title. And, if the citizen soldiery had objected, what could Jonas have done? Surely nothing. He was a colonel notwithstanding himself, and, if he had wanted to do so, he could not have dropped the title. Of course he could have refused to answer his friends when they called him colonel, and could have sternly reprimanded strangers for making free with his cognomen; but everybody knows that that line of conduct would not have had the desired result. We all know that our friends take special delight in doing those things which annoy us most, and strangers would probably have resented such reprimands, and have looked upon our hero as an ill-conditioned puppy.

Anyhow, right or wrong, Jonas had become a colonel, and had become so accustomed to the name that he not only did not object to it, but answered to it readily even when addressed by strangers.

CHAPTER III.

COLONEL WITHERS.

EVERYBODY knows that all the fun in life is not found by strictly attending to business. Of course you are gravely informed, by the Gradgrinds, that Mr. A. made his millions by plodding at his avocation "from morn till noon, from noon till dewy eve," on every secular day of the year. So be it! Let him keep his millions. Who would purchase them at that price? Variety, after all, is the spice of life, and I (mind you I am speaking only for myself) would much rather have a little pleasure on life's journey than all the millions in Golconda. I (speaking again entirely for myself) look upon business as a painful necessity at best, to be dropped at every convenient opportunity. Of course, when my imagination is in a terribly fruitful condition, I can mentally see a man who might look upon business as pleasure. I once knew a man who, when he travelled and wanted something particularly light and entertaining for reading purposes, was accustomed to put a copy of Locke on the Human Understanding in his satchel. I feel convinced, however, that I should heartily dislike the person who looked upon business as fun, for I must say that I loathed the Locke on the Human Understanding man.

All which is introductory to the fact that Jonas Smith dropped business for a short period, in the sweet summer time, and started for the White Mountains. Jonas was not accustomed to holidays, and naturally enough he had been in some doubt as to the best place in which to spend his vacation. He had finally decided between the St. Lawrence and the White Mountains by the turn of a copper, — mere chance! Forgive me, fate! How could I have permitted such a word as chance to slip in here, when all the succeeding pages will be written for the express purpose of showing that the route, which Jonas should follow on this occasion, was marked out ages and ages ago? Whatever it was that controlled him, certain it is that he started for the mountains, and that he had, at the time when we join him, reached Boston by a rather circuitous route.

Jonas stopped at the Hub Hotel. Pshaw! of course it isn't in the Directory. I didn't say it was; I merely remarked that it was in Boston. A great many people and things keep and are kept out of the Directory. Some persons don't want to serve on juries, some don't want to submit to taxation on their personal property, and some are terribly afraid of drafts. Between ourselves the proprietor of this hotel kept it out of the Directory. Why? you inquire. Look at the name! How that name would touch the heart of a Bostonian! The truth is, that the landlord feared that, if his house were well known in the city, it would be filled with Bostonians. Strange, you say, that he should not want his house filled with Bostonians. Not at all, I assure you! Under those circumstances he would

have had no transient guests, and he would have been compelled to pay wages to his waiters.

As our hero finished the last flourish upon the tail-end of the signature, which he had placed in the register, the clerk handed him some letters.

"Ah, colonel," said the clerk, "here are a couple of letters for you."

Jonas took the letters. Sure enough they were addressed to Colonel Jonas Smith. He carried them to his room, and laid them aside, until he had made a temporary separation between his body and the railroad dust which he had collected. Then, having read his letters, he marched forth towards the dining-room. As he approached the clerk's desk, he saw walking up and down in front of it a tall, well-built, fine-looking gentleman, about fifty-five or sixty years of age. He was as straight as an arrow; every feature of his face was strongly marked; a grizzled mustache bristled on his upper lip; his hair, partly gray, was cut short; his coat was buttoned closely across his chest, as if he defied the heat, and his whole appearance was that of a military veteran of the old school.

As Jonas approached the desk the clerk saluted him with the invitation: —

"Colonel, won't you take an appetizer before dinner?"

The old gentleman, whose back was turned towards the clerk, wheeled around and remarked: —

"I thank you, but — "

When Jonas very coolly replied: —

"I don't object."

The veteran looked at Jonas in astonishment; but presently it entered his head that the invitation might have been addressed to our hero.

"Are you, sir, a colonel?" asked the veteran.

Jonas, who thought the inquiry a slightly impertinent one when made by a perfect stranger, did not see fit to explain, and so he simply replied: —

"At your service, sir."

"I'm delighted," said the old gentleman, coming forward, eagerly. Then he stopped, and muttered, "I don't know him from Adam. I'm falling into that deuced American habit of speaking to everybody."

The old gentleman turned as if about to move away, when the clerk came from behind the desk, and addressed Jonas once more.

"Well, colonel," said the clerk, "are you ready?"

That started the old gentleman once more, and he buttonholed the clerk.

"Is that gentleman one of your friends?" asked he, pointing to Jonas.

"Particular, I may say very particular friend," replied the clerk, promptly.

"And you know that he is a colonel?" asked the veteran.

"Know it! Why, my dear colonel, I fought in the same regiment," answered the clerk, as promptly as if his imagination were not unusually vigorous.

"Suppose you introduce me," suggested the veteran.

"Charmed to do so. Colonel Smith, let me introduce Colonel Withers; Colonel Withers, Colonel Smith."

"I'm delighted to meet you, sir," said Colonel Withers, as he shook hands. "I'm always delighted to meet a military man."

"I'm sure the pleasure is reciprocal," said Jonas, who resolved, for the fun of the thing, to allow the old gentleman to think that he was a real colonel.

"And now, gentlemen, about that appetizer?" said the clerk.

Whereupon they all adjourned to the bar-room, and drank to their new-made friendship.

Colonel Withers was very pompous and dignified in his manner; but, to a military gentleman, he was a very pleasant companion. Jonas and he stood chatting in the bar-room for some little time, until our hero finally recollected that he had started for the dining-room. Then he suggested to Colonel Withers that, as he was extraordinarily hungry, he would go to dinner, if the colonel would excuse him.

"No," said Colonel Withers, "I can't lose you so soon. When I meet a military gentleman I stick close to him. It's just my dinner-hour, and, if you'll step into the parlor with me, I'll introduce you to my daughter, and we'll go to dinner together."

What could Jonas do under the circumstances, except submit? As he looked at the well-marked features of the colonel, he pictured in his mind the daughter as a tall, raw-boned lady, with strong features, like unto her sire's, and spectacles, — of course spectacles; for, curiously enough, nature has always provided that kind of female with eyes

that require spectacles. Still there was no way of avoiding the infliction for the present, though Jonas resolved that he would escape the female dragoon's clutches, if he were compelled to change his hotel.

"Come along, colonel," said Colonel Withers.

Then he linked his arm in that of Jonas, and led our hero like a lamb to the — parlor.

As they walked slowly along the hall-way, Jonas could not avoid glancing occasionally at the stony, hard features of the colonel, and wondering how he had thus allowed himself to be taken possession of. Then the vision of the female, he had conjured up in his mind, kept flitting before his mental vision; and he shuddered as he thought of the unknown ills he was daring. For a moment the idea took possession of his mind that he had better take to his heels, and fly at once, but he felt that that performance would be not only ridiculous, but weak.

The colonel walked along by the side of Jonas in complete silence; not a word did he utter; not an explanation did he breathe. Jonas, who was looking forward to something decidedly unpleasant, also advanced in silence. The parlor was located at a considerable distance from the bar-room, in fact at the other end of the house, on the floor above. Finally they reached the stairs; slowly they ascended the steps, and, in a moment, stood on the threshold of the parlor.

CHAPTER IV.

KITTY WITHERS.

They walked into the room. Jonas was prepared to meet the strong-minded, spectacled daughter of the colonel, whom he had pictured to himself, in a very dignified and distant manner. He had made up his mind to address a few commonplace remarks to her, to escort her, if compelled to do so, to dinner, and then to escape from her presence at the earliest possible moment. When he entered the room he was as dignified as a pasha with ten or twelve tails, and as solemn as an owl. He was somewhat astonished therefore, when a very beautiful young girl rose from a sofa, on which she had been sitting, seized Colonel Withers' arm, and exclaimed: —

"O papa, do you propose to starve me?"

"Not a bit, Kitty," replied the colonel; "but let me introduce my friend, Colonel Smith; Colonel Smith, my daughter."

Jonas was, it must be admitted, somewhat dumfounded, but he recovered his presence of mind sufficiently to enable him to make one or two remarks before the party started for the dining-room. Then they all left the parlor, and marched slowly, but surely, towards the room in which the most

important part of man's life is passed. Colonel Withers was good-natured enough to walk a few feet in front of the rest of the party, and thus enable them to become better acquainted.

"Colonel Smith," said Miss Kitty, and then she hesitated as if she were afraid that she might go too far.

"I am all ears," said he, smiling.

"But I fear that you may think that I am rude."

"Well, ask the question, and I promise to tell you if I think so."

"Has papa known you long?" asked she, looking eagerly into his face.

"The whole of half an hour."

"Half an hour, and he calls you his friend!" said she, with a puzzled expression.

"He has done me that honor."

"I never knew him to do such a thing before; but then perhaps some particular friend recommended you to him."

"Yes, a particular friend of your humble servant did so."

"Might one ask who he is?"

"Certainly; he is — your humble servant."

Kitty laughed gayly as they entered the dining-room. The colonel led the way to his table, and Kitty and Jonas followed him.

"By the way, colonel," said Colonel Withers, when they had taken their seats, "my daughter and I take turns in ordering dinner. It is her turn to-day, but of course you will order what you please."

"Not at all," replied Jonas. "I hope Miss Withers will

include me in the party, and order my dinner with the rest."

"I'll try," said Kitty. "Let's see. Soup *consommé* —"

"That means consumed, doesn't it?" asked Jonas.

"Not so bad as that," replied Kitty, "for, on that principle of translation, the *café glacé*, at the other end of the bill, — would mean coffee in glasses. Of course you will have maccaroni soup."

"Of course," replied Jonas. "You made a very good guess as to my taste there."

Colonel Withers laughed vigorously at the words of Jonas, much to the latter's astonishment.

"Why, wasn't it a good guess?" inquired Jonas.

"Very," solemnly replied Kitty, "inasmuch as there is no other kind to-day."

They all laughed merrily at her remark, and the dinner started off under good auspices.

Jonas managed to do his duty as a boarder at the hotel; and yet, while industriously plying his knife and fork, he found time to scan Miss Kitty's form and features, and they were well worthy of an examination. She was tall for a woman, had a fine, though not slight figure, possessed rather dainty features, eyes that, though they were blue, just bordered on gray, and light auburn hair. When in repose her features presented a rather solemn appearance, as do all faces which have intellect behind them; but, when her eyes lit up and a smile played over her face, nothing could be more bright and sparkling than her countenance.

The colonel was evidently very fond of his fair daughter,

and it was apparent, to the most casual observer, that Miss Kitty could do almost anything she pleased with her doting father.

Perhaps it may be well to explain, before going further, who our hero's new friends were. Colonel Withers had been the lieutenant-colonel of a regiment in the English army, but was now on the retired list. He had visited New York in accordance with the advice of his physician, and had been quietly domiciled there more than six months; in fact he had not left the city after his arrival there, until the advent of summer had started him on the regulation American pilgrimage to a watering-place. Kitty was the only member of his family now living, and all the affection of her father seemed to be centred in her; but then Kitty repaid his love heartily, and the colonel generally indulged her most thoroughly. Kitty was much more like an American than an English girl, — more free in her manners, less cold, and dignified and distant, than most English young ladies appear to be. Perhaps the fact that she had been for so long a time — ever since her mother's death, three years before we present her — the mistress of her father's household may account for that; and perhaps it may have been merely her natural disposition.

As our party was idling over the nuts and raisins, Jonas suggested: —

"I am very sorry that I shall be compelled to leave such pleasant company so soon."

"Why," asked Colonel Withers, "must you go at once?"

"In the morning," replied Jonas.

"Ah," sighed Kitty, "we leave at some wretchedly early hour."

"Which way do you go?" asked Colonel Withers.

"To the White Mountains," replied Jonas.

"Why, papa," said Kitty, and then she stopped suddenly.

"Yes," said her father," we are going to the same place, and, if not disagreeable to you, I don't see why we can't travel together."

Kitty's eyes sparkled as she looked at Jonas, as if she also was thinking that she could not see why they could not travel together.

"I should like it very much," said Jonas, casting upon Kitty a glance of admiration, under which her eyes fell.

So they arranged the details of the route then and there. As they left the dining-room Jonas excused himself for the afternoon, by informing them that it was absolutely necessary that he should call upon a friend.

"But you will drop into our box at the Globe this evening?" said the colonel.

Jonas read an invitation in Kitty's eyes, and assured the colonel that he would.

CHAPTER V.

DRILLING A COLONEL.

Now when Jonas made that statement, that it was absolutely necessary that he should call upon a friend, it must

be admitted that he wandered a little from the exact truth. However, the truth is sometimes a very unpleasant companion, and even a hero may be pardoned if he occasionally, very occasionally of course, stray away from such an associate. It was not at all necessary that he should call upon his friend; in fact, prior to meeting Miss Kitty, he had not had the most remote intention of calling on his friend, but during dinner-hour he had reasoned himself into a belief that that visit was an absolute necessity.

You see, the colonel's daughter was very pretty, — uncommonly pretty would not be too strong a way of putting it; she had taken captive Jonas' fancy, and that gentleman surmised that she would be a very pleasant companion among the mountains. To keep near the daughter, however, it was necessary that he should sometimes interest the father. Now he had been introduced to the father as a colonel; in fact, he had admitted to the old gentleman that he was a colonel, and he felt that he could not have attained his present position in the colonel's family except as a colonel. It was absolutely necessary, then, that he should sustain, at least decently, the character in which he had started. How was he to do that? Of course he had the general stock of information with regard to our late war, which is possessed by most intelligent people; but that would not be sufficient for a colonel. He knew, for instance, that there had been a battle at Gettysburg; but whether the Union forces were there located on a hill and the Confederates in a valley, — whether the right wing or the left wing of either army rested on a river, or a house, or

was in the air, — were unknown facts to him. And yet, if he intended to be a colonel, even a pseudo-colonel, he must mark out the battles at which he had been present. He could, of course, have placed himself in the rear guard, but that would have been *contra dig.*, and it would probably have disgusted the colonel. Now, Jonas had a friend in Boston, who was a real major, and he resolved to go to that gentleman, get a few hints for his guidance in the future, and borrow some military works and a history of the civil war.

Thus our hero reasoned. See how plain a story will put him down. He could have gone to Colonel Withers, and said, "Sir, I am not a colonel. I have never been in the army."

To be sure, Colonel Withers would probably have replied, "Then, sir, I wish you a very good day."

That would have been unpleasant, but it shows that there was no real necessity for the visit which Jonas proposed to make. Unfortunately, if Colonel Withers should thus cast him off, he would be driven from the presence of Miss Kitty, and — well, he really wanted to become better acquainted with that little lady. So off Jonas went to call on Major Vinturn.

Major Vinturn lived in a pleasant little cottage in Cambridge, and, when Jonas reached the house, the major and his wife were sitting on the piazza, enjoying the cool afternoon breeze. Of course they welcomed Jonas heartily, and made much of him. So full was he of his subject, that hardly were the greetings over, when he burst forth: —

"I say, major, make a colonel of me."

Mrs. Vinturn, who was a tall brunette, of a lively disposition, laughed vigorously at this remark. The major, a rather tall, sedate-looking man, took it more seriously, and replied: —

"Pooh, Jonas, don't be so modest! Ask for a major-generalship at once."

"Pshaw!" said Jonas. "I don't mean that."

"Honestly, however," said the major, "when I am elected president, you shall be appointed to the first vacant colonelcy."

All this amused Mrs. Vinturn, and she laughed merrily at Jonas.

"What I want," said Jonas, "is to know what a colonel does and says."

"Well," said the major, "he struts around a good deal, puts on a great many airs, and says very little."

"Then I think," said Jonas, "that I can do that."

"Yes, I think so," said Mrs. Vinturn, "as far as the strutting goes."

"You know," said the major, "a fellow gets a deuce of a reputation for cleverness, if he only looks wise, and keeps his mouth shut all the time."

"Come," said Mrs. Vinturn, "tell us all about it."

Then Jonas told them about his new acquaintances, painted the colonel in sombre and Miss Kitty in glowing colors, and told them how he feared that, if the colonel found out that he was an impostor, he would prevent him from becoming better acquainted with the fair Miss Kitty.

"Now," said Jonas, "you know just what I want; so drill me in my business as rapidly as you can."

"But I have some doubts," said the major, slyly, "as to the propriety of such a line of conduct."

"Pshaw!" said Jonas.

"But hear me," continued the major. "Here you propose to foist yourself upon an unsuspecting old gentleman as a colonel, when you are not even a high private, and you want to make me a *particeps criminis* before the act. Really, my dear fellow, that's stretching friendship."

"Now I'll leave it to Mrs. Vinturn, if it is not fair enough under the circumstances."

"Of course it is," replied that lady. "All things are fair in love. Besides, what right has the father to prevent any one but a military gent from enjoying the society of his daughter?"

"Well," said the major, "if the wife of my bosom thus turns against me, I am at your service. Now, if you'll come out into the garden, and let Mrs. Vinturn look after tea, I'll instruct you."

"But why can't I see the performance?" asked Mrs. Vinturn.

"My dear," said her husband, "I am only a major, and I have a vague impression that you already fill the position of lieutenant-colonel. That's quite high enough for me."

"Well," said Mrs. Vinturn, laughing, "don't stay more than an hour."

Jonas and the major strolled into the garden, and the major poured forth such suggestions as he could think of in

the brief period at his command. Then they returned and took tea with Mrs. Vinturn.

Jonas had scarcely time to enjoy his cigar before he was compelled to start forth in order to keep his engagement at the theatre. Of course he could have stayed at the major's and missed the engagement. Would you have done so? My dear sir, I don't believe you would.

Jonas enjoyed himself very much at the theatre, and when they reached the hotel and said good-night he quite rejoiced in the reflection that they would meet on the morrow. As soon as he had reached his room he attacked the books which the major had sent to his hotel. History is very interesting reading, and Jonas would probably have known all about the battle of Antietam, if, unfortunately, the page of the book had not been constantly covered by a bright, charming face, that seemed to smile at him. He fell to day-dreaming, and when he finally closed the volume he went to bed with but a slight increase of his stock of information, and there he fell to dreaming again, — real dreaming on this occasion.

CHAPTER VI.

JOURNEYING.

On the following morning Jonas did not succeed in rising as early as he had intended; so that, when he reached the parlor, he found the colonel and his fair daughter waiting

for him. Jonas made his excuses as well as he could, charging his dilatoriness to the book he had read(!).

"Have you heard, Colonel Smith, of the new proverb they have discovered in Pompeii?" asked Miss Kitty.

"No, indeed," replied he. "What is it?"

"'The early bird catches the worm.'"

"But it strikes me that I have heard that before."

"Can it be possible? Well, in this case the worm is breakfast, and I fear we may lose it."

"There's some danger of that," added Colonel Withers.

"Well then," said Jonas, "*en avant.*"

Now there are a thousand-and-one places to which a tourist can go, and there are many ways by which a tourist can go to them, but the experienced traveller finds very few spots at which he likes to tarry, and the means of conveyance to them very limited. It's all very well for corporations to advertise that they will take you through to your destination, without change, by a route which is one mile shorter in space and five minutes shorter in time than that of any opposition line; it's all very well for commercial travellers and gentlemen of that kind; but the real tourist does not pine after anything of that sort. Make the route attractive, and the length of it will not be troublesome. Sitting in a railroad car during the whole day, admiring virgin forests, may be sport to some folks, but then those people would probably get fun out of the elevating occupation of sitting in their back-yards and gazing upon a potato patch. Anyhow our party did not select the through route; they went by a road which offered at least a little variety.

From Boston they went by rail to Weirs on Lake Winnipiseogee. When they entered the drawing-room car, Jonas took particular pains to put Miss Kitty between her father and himself. Then, whenever the old colonel attempted to talk to him, he pretended that the noise of the train prevented him from hearing, and thus compelled the old gentleman to screech out every observation that he made. This sort of conversation soon wearied the veteran, and then Jonas plied him with the newspapers, with which he had provided himself for that purpose. Thus Jonas was at liberty to exert himself in efforts to amuse Miss Kitty. Naturally enough the first subject was the scenery. The weather and the scenery are the Scylla and Charybdis of conversation; if you avoid one you fall into the other.

"Of course you'll be horrified," said Kitty, "when I tell you that I don't as a rule adore scenery."

"I am rather astonished," replied he.

"Oh, I know that it is customary for young ladies to gush over scenery; but you must have noticed that they do it over all scenery."

Jonas was compelled to admit that they did.

"That simply shows," continued she, "that they do not appreciate it at all."

Jonas looked somewhat mystified.

"Of course," added she, "there are scenes which I admire very much, but I don't think that every particle of landscape is something to marvel at."

Jonas had never thought of that before. He had been accustomed, as most people are, to assent when asked if the

scenery before him was not beautiful, without reflecting that discrimination is the very soul of true admiration. He began to think that Miss Kitty was at least a young lady, who had opinions of her own, and who, unlike the majority of her sex and age, was not afraid to express them. He was further strengthened in this view when she pointed out to him several delicious bits of landscape, which he was compelled to admit showed excellent taste on her part.

There is not usually a lack of conversation between an intelligent young couple, especially when the lady has views of her own which she is able to express; and so they rambled on in their talk over books, and plays, and actors, and even glided around the edges of that terrible maelstrom, society. To be sure they often differed, but that led to discussion, and gave zest to the conversation. Altogether Jonas was having a very pleasant time; for a woman, who has wit enough to keep your intellect constantly on the *qui vive*, is rare company.

Presently the colonel finished his papers. Then he took off his glasses and looked at Jonas and Kitty. As he gazed at them the thought came into his mind that this new acquaintance, about whom he knew nothing, was becoming uncommonly well acquainted with Miss Kitty. Now that was not what he had intended by any means, but what could he do at the present moment? He thought it over slowly and carefully. If he had been called upon to lead a regiment against thousands of howling East Indian savages he would have known what to do; but how to prevent this budding intimacy was a conundrum which he could not

solve. The worst of it was that he was not quite sure that he desired to prevent it. Kitty was young, and naturally enjoyed the society of young people; if this youthful colonel could amuse her, why should he not be allowed to do so? The colonel thought, and thought, and thought about this matter and — fell asleep.

Jonas and Kitty meanwhile were becoming quite well acquainted with each other, and Jonas thanked his stars that he had not informed the old gentleman that his title was only a nickname, for he found that Miss Kitty was a delightful companion. The old colonel slept on, and the young colonel chatted on, until they reached Weirs.

CHAPTER VII.

A DAY AT CENTRE HARBOR.

They arrived at Weirs. Here, according to the programme, they were to have embarked on a steamboat, but, alas! that fickle means of conveyance had unfortunately broken some of the manifold intricate pieces of iron, which formed her motive-power, and she lay, like some wounded Titan, at the dock, quite incapable of accomplishing her usual work. Some six-seated wagons had, however, been sent for the passengers, and presently they hurried therein. Unfortunately the colonel was rather slow in his movements,

so that all the passengers, except his party, had ensconced themselves in the wagons before he reached them. And it was raining; that is the way they put it in that country, but in our more civilized community we would have said that it was raining cats and dogs. Every seat in the wagons was full; there was nothing better for them than a seat with the driver. It took some little time for that fact to impress itself on Colonel Withers' mind. Then he glared at everybody.

"Some of these people might give a lady a seat," gruffly said Colonel Withers.

Not a soul stirred. There were men inside, but, under the circumstances, they declined to move. Every one waited for some one else. You see in a car it's all very well for a man to rise and offer his seat to a lady; there the fair lady is before your eyes, and the only punishment you suffer is that of being compelled to stand. Here, unfortunately, the lady was so wrapped up that no one could tell whether she was fair or otherwise, and the rain outside was falling very rapidly.

"Pooh, papa!" said Miss Kitty. "I am wrapped up in my waterproof, and we all have umbrellas; we'll sit on the driver's seat."

So they sat on the driver's seat, and that gentleman sat on the dashboard.

Kitty hid herself under an umbrella; the colonel did likewise, and Jonas followed their example. The wind, however, continually played elfish tricks with their means of shelter; at which performances the colonel became enraged.

Kitty, on the other hand, laughed heartily at their mishaps, and, as Jonas assisted her in that occupation, the colonel finally joined in. Then, as Kitty insisted upon holding her own umbrella, and as that required both her hands, Jonas was of course compelled, whenever her waterproof blew open or the cape on it blew in her face, to wrap it around her more carefully, or to remove the obnoxious garment from her face, even at the risk of touching her cheeks. As she turned her bright, laughing countenance to him, and thanked him for his attentions, Jonas again felt very strongly that Miss Kitty was a charming companion, and that he must by all means keep on the military side of her father, — at least for the present.

Centre Harbor is quite a little distance from Weirs, as the road runs, and yet what with fixing Kitty's waterproof, straightening her umbrella, laughing at her and his own mishaps and chatting gayly, Jonas was quite astonished when they reached their hotel. Fortunately the rain was only a summer shower, and so, when they reached Centre Harbor, the last drops were falling from the sky, and the sun was breaking through the clouds. Of course everybody was ravenously hungry, and so everybody hurried from their rooms to the dining-hall. When Kitty entered, escorted by her father and Jonas, freed from her wraps, quite a number of young men who had occupied seats inside the stages regretted that they had been so short-sighted.

After dinner everybody strolled out to examine the place. There was, it must be admitted, very little to see. Centre

Harbor would have been just the spot for the man who, when he went into the country, wanted to go into the country. However, the broad expanse of the lake stretches before the house, and one who is fond of water scenery can enjoy himself thoroughly at Winnipiseogee. Our party strolled around the lawn for a while, looked into the billiard-room and bowling-alley, and then, taking a boat, went out on the lake. Jonas kept the boat gently moving, while Kitty, in a low, sweet voice, sang them dainty airs. Thus they spent the afternoon.

In the evening, after supper, they sat on the piazza, and watched the moonbeams as they glanced on the bosom of the lake.

"Come, Colonel Smith," said the real colonel, "tell us some of your army experiences."

Kitty looked at him eagerly as if she, too, would like to hear some of his army experiences.

"Excuse me, colonel," said Jonas, "but did you ever see Robertson's 'School'?"

"Did I ever see 'School,' Kitty?" asked the colonel.

"Why, of course you did, papa; don't you remember how you laughed at the funny sayings of Naomi?"

"Yes, of course," replied the colonel; "the girl who didn't know how far it is to the moon."

"Well, I think," continued Jonas, "that it is in 'School,' though it may be in some other play, that the hero declines to tell about his own victories, even after the example of Othello is cited to him."

"But," said the colonel, "you didn't become a colonel all at once."

"Ah — I — no — no, of course not," gasped Jonas.

"Then tell us how you became one, for you are quite young to have attained such a position."

Poor Jonas was in a quandary. What should he do? was the question that was staring him in the face. What would you have done under the circumstances? Remember, he knew that, if he confessed, the colonel would cut him dead, and then farewell to Miss Kitty. He glanced at her. She was looking eagerly at him, and, as she caught his eye, added to her father's request: —

"Yes, do, Colonel Smith, tell us all about the way in which you became a colonel."

Even at that moment Jonas could hardly refrain from laughing, as the thought of how he became a colonel flashed through his mind, and he was half tempted again to tell Colonel Withers the whole truth; but, as he glanced at that gentleman's severe countenance, and reflected upon the probable consequences of such an avowal, he resolved that, for the present at least, he would refrain, and so he simply said: —

"There is absolutely no story to tell, colonel. In short, I am Colonel Smith, at your service. That is all there is of it. There, Miss Withers," added he, "I hear the 'Beautiful Blue Danube;' surely you are not too tired to dance to those strains?"

"Never," replied Kitty. "We ladies, you know, can always dance, even when we are too tired to do anything else."

So they went into the parlor and left the old colonel on the piazza to ruminate.

"Well," thought the colonel, "it's queer, decidedly queer. Either the fellow is astonishingly modest, or there's nothing in it. I never was afraid to recount the acts I did, and I don't see why he should be. Really, I'm afraid I'm allowing myself and Kitty to become too intimate with him; but how the deuce am I to help it now? He behaves like a gentleman, and I invited him to accompany us. Well, Kitty is able to take care of herself, and, if not, why I'll look out for her."

Meanwhile, Kitty and Jonas went on with their waltz, and that led to a galop, and that to a quadrille, and that, well, to innumerable other dances, until finally they strolled out on the piazza to find the colonel, but he had disappeared. Then they stepped out on the walk in front of the house, and finally moved slowly down to the lake. Jonas saw the colonel approaching them, but he avoided him by walking along the lake to the main road, and then up that road to the house. The colonel followed them, but did not overtake them until they were once more on the piazza.

"Come, Kitty," said the colonel, "we leave early in the morning, and must retire at once."

"Not so very early, colonel," said Jonas.

"Early for us, sir," replied the colonel, somewhat gruffly.

Jonas was astounded by the tone of the colonel's reply, and even the "Good-night, colonel," of the fair Miss Kitty, could hardly drive the colonel's speech from his ears. It must be remembered, however, that Jonas did not know

what the colonel had said to himself while Jonas and Kitty were dancing.

CHAPTER VIII.

EN AVANT.

In the morning our party prepared to take the coach, which was to carry them to the railroad station. The colonel was still solemn and morose, and still he looked at Jonas with suspicion. Kitty, however, was still smiling and agreeable, and so Jonas very soon gave up all efforts to discover what ailed the colonel.

Of course our party rode on top of the coach. You may say what you please about the new-fangled methods of carrying people, but there is nothing, after all, like the top of an old-fashioned stage-coach on a clear summer's day. Riding high up in the free, fresh air, with six horses dashing you along at a rate just rapid enough to be exhilarating, must be enjoyed in order to be understood; it cannot be described.

The colonel had intended to seat himself between Kitty and Jonas; but, unfortunately for him, nature has provided that young limbs shall be spryer than old ones; and so, when he reached the top of the stage, Kitty was sitting on the middle of the seat, Jonas at the far end, and the colonel

was, perforce, compelled to sit in the only seat remaining. At first he suggested a change, but the driver soon put a damper on that.

"Now look-a-here, colonel, if it be as you are a colonel," said the driver, "I'm fat and so be you; I sit on this side, and you must sit on t'other. This stage must balance somehow."

The colonel dropped into the seat; but he was decidedly sulky. At first, whenever he replied to any of Jonas' observations, he addressed that gentleman as sir, just for all the world as if our hero were not a colonel. However, Jonas exerted himself to the utmost of his abilities to be entertaining, and his sallies and Kitty's merry laughter soon put the veteran in better humor, and he almost forgot his suspicions of the preceding night.

It was a charming section of the country through which they passed, though it must be confessed that the road ran up hill and down dale with tolerable regularity, and that the stage ofttimes lurched viciously in the ruts. Oh, the delight of riding on top of a stage-coach by the side of a dainty damsel, whose faintest touch sends a thrill through your frame when the coach lurches! If, under those circumstances, Miss Kitty grasped Jonas' arm as a support, instead of her father's, one should not wonder; for, when one is frightened, one will do just such things, and, besides, Jonas did not object; in fact, he rather liked the performance.

The colonel, unfortunately, was driven back to his sulkiness by a blunder which he made. A large number of

buggies and wagons of every description passed the stage; they were in single file, and were placed close behind each other.

"Where," asked the colonel of the driver, "are those people going?"

"Blackberrying," replied the driver.

"Black burying!" ejaculated the colonel. "Do they bury colored people in this land without a hearse?"

Everybody laughed uproariously at the colonel's mistake. The colonel looked astonished.

"They are going for blackberries," explained Kitty.

Then the colonel drew himself into himself, and his looks boded no good to Jonas.

Sure enough, when they reached the railroad, the colonel took particular pains to place himself beside his daughter, so that Jonas could not get very near to her. Jonas submitted to the inevitable, but he resolved that, at the first break, he would change all that. Thus they journeyed to North Conway and reached that spot just in time for dinner. After dinner Jonas suggested to Miss Kitty that, as they had a few moments to spare, they should take a look at the village. To this proposition the colonel reluctantly assented, and instructed them to return in time for the stage. Jonas winked when he heard this suggestion; for, although he had suggested a trip through the village, the stage was really the object which he had in view.

Now, as a stroll through the village included merely a walk through a single street for a very short distance, and a passing glance at Mount Kearsage, Kitty and Jonas were

soon snugly ensconced on top of the stage. When the colonel came out he was astounded, for he had determined to place himself in the middle of the seat, cost what it might. He looked at Jonas grimly, but what could he do? He could not insult that gentleman openly, and besides he did not know that he wanted to. If Jonas was really a military man, the colonel was quite willing that the young gentleman should amuse Miss Kitty; but the horrible thought darted constantly through his mind that perhaps this young man, who had thus become attached to his party, was not an officer at all. However, the colonel said nothing; but, as he mounted to his seat on the stage, a stern resolve entered his mind. He resolved that he would probe this young gentleman's mind, and see if he really knew anything about military affairs.

Accordingly, as soon as the coach started, the colonel began; but, unfortunately, the veteran had reckoned without his host. When it is given to an American to be bright, he is uncommonly smart. Jonas saw through the colonel's attack at once, and resolved that he would not be probed. The colonel stood up to his work manfully; but Jonas was too clever for him. Such rambling from one thing to another, such changes of subjects of conversation, as that young gentleman made, would startle the reader if here set down. When the old gentleman pushed him too hard, he would burst into a description of some battle, the details of which he had read in the history he had borrowed, and paint it for all the world just as if he had been there. Then he would make the colonel withdraw by engaging

Miss Kitty in the discussion of something in which the colonel was not in the least interested. Finally, the old veteran gave up the contest, still uncertain whether Jonas was or was not a military man. Jonas smiled as the old gentleman withdrew, and gave himself up to the scenery and Miss Kitty.

Truly it was a delightful scene through which they passed during that afternoon. There is no more romantic road in existence than the one which leads from North Conway to the mountains, and there is no more delightful way of passing over it than on a stage-coach. The sun sank slowly in the west as they drove along, the cool breeze of evening blew through the trees, the shadows of the overarching oaks lengthened in the road, and the full moon crept upwards from the eastern horizon. On they went gayly, and, as the twilight faded away, they reached the Glen House.

CHAPTER IX.

MR. AND MRS. HASTROM.

As the stage drove up to the piazza of the Glen House, quite a number of the hotel guests rushed out to welcome the new-comers. Among the spectators was a short, chubby, round-faced, pleasant-looking young man, who, as soon as he saw Jonas, cried out: —

"Hollo, colonel, how are you?"

Jonas looked down, saw his interlocutor, and, with the usual inconsistency of Americans, replied: —

"How are you, Charley?"

When Colonel Withers heard that salutation his face brightened. Perhaps, after all, he thought, it is all right. Suspicions are never proof, and Charley's salutation to Jonas partially dissipated those of the colonel.

As soon as they reached the platform Colonel Withers was seized by an elderly gentleman with whom he was well acquainted, while Jonas was taken possession of by Charley.

"Come, my boy," cried Charley; "Becky is in the parlor, and I want to take you right in there. Why the mischief didn't you come to the wedding?"

Then he linked his arm in that of Jonas, and endeavored to lead the latter gentleman away.

"Hold on," said Jonas. "Don't you see that I have a lady under my care?"

"Excuse me," said Charlie, "and introduce me."

So Jonas introduced him to Miss Kitty.

"What," cried Charley, "Miss Withers, the daughter of Colonel Withers?"

Kitty laughingly replied that Colonel Withers claimed her as his daughter.

"I'm delighted," exclaimed Charley, "perfectly delighted. Becky knows you. I've heard her say so an hundred times. You must come right in, too. Becky's never been on a wedding-tour before, and perhaps, — but then, maybe you've never been on a wedding-tour."

Kitty laughed heartily.

"Of course you haven't. What am I thinking of? But come right in, Miss Withers. Two women can think of four times as many things as one can. Come, Jonas."

"Not so fast, Charley," replied Jonas; "Miss Withers must wait for her father."

"As the man says in the play," added Kitty, "I have a father."

"Pooh!" said Charley, "I'll fix that."

Thereupon he marched up to the gentleman who was talking to Colonel Withers.

"Mr. Brown," said he, "won't you introduce me to Colonel Withers?"

The introduction was accomplished at once.

"Excuse me, colonel," said Charley, "but my wife knows your daughter, and I want to take Miss Withers into the parlor where Becky is, — Becky is my wife, you see. Have you any objection?"

"None at all," replied the colonel. "I'll come there presently for her."

"There," cried Charley, turning to Jonas, "I knew it. Come along now, both of you, and see Becky."

As they walked along, Charley grew confidential with Miss Kitty.

"You see," said he, "I never was married before."

Kitty laughed merrily.

"Oh, I know," continued he, good-naturedly, "that anyone can see that; it's written all over me, Becky says. You

see, however, Becky has no friends here of her own sex, and so I am delighted to see you."

In the parlor they found Mrs. Becky. She was almost the counterpart of her husband. A little, bustling body, with brown hair and eyes, and with a nose just the least bit "tip-tilted," she was just as full of fun and jollity as her husband. After the ladies had gushed over each other sufficiently, Jonas was introduced to Mrs. Becky, and he at once made his excuses for not having attended her wedding. Then Mrs. Becky escorted Miss Kitty to her room, Jonas went to his room, and Charley strolled into the office.

Meanwhile the colonel had been investigating Jonas' military standing: that is to say, he had been laying the foundations for such an investigation.

"Sir," said he to Mr. Brown, "are you well acquainted with this Mr. Hastrom, to whom you introduced me?"

"Certainly," replied Mr. Brown, "he married my sister's daughter."

"And he is what, — in the way of business I mean?"

"A member of one of the soundest firms in the city, a good business man, and a clever fellow."

"I'm delighted to hear that," replied the colonel, quite relieved. "And do you know Colonel Smith?"

"No, except that I have heard Charlie speak of him."

Thereupon the colonel went to the desk, registered himself, and retired to the room which was allotted to him.

Charley Hastrom was one of the most intimate friends of Jonas. Many times had they taken their bachelor pleasures together. They moved in the same set; but while every one

supposed that Jonas would some day become a benedict, Charley was looked upon by every one of his acquaintances as a sure candidate for old bachelorhood. However, in those things everybody is always mistaken, and so Charley married. He found the goddess he adored outside of the set in which he moved, as often happens; which fact accounts for the circumstance that Jonas was unacquainted with her. Of course Jonas would have attended the wedding had he been in town, but unfortunately he had been compelled at that time to go to Washington on business; so that, until he met her at the Glen House, Jonas was entirely unacquainted with Mrs. Hastrom.

Miss Kitty, on the other hand, had known Mrs. Becky for two or three years, though never very intimately. She had been present at the wedding, and had there seen Charley, but that was the extent of her acquaintance with that gentleman. The truth is that Charley had done his courting and marrying, as he did everything else, in a terrible hurry; so that his friends hardly knew that he had found a divinity before they heard that he was married.

Fortunately there are people in the world with whom you become acquainted very easily, and who show their friendly spirit at the slightest provocation, and fortunately there are places where, "will you, nill you," you must become intimate with the people to whom you are introduced. Mr. and Mrs. Hastrom belonged to that class of people, and the Glen House to that class of places.

CHAPTER X.

CHARLEY PUTS A FEATHER IN THE COLONEL'S CAP.

CHARLEY HASTROM wandered impatiently up and down the hall, waiting for his wife and Miss Kitty. Ever and anon he'd glance at the staircase, as if he really expected them. Certainly he had not yet learned the ways of women. Who ever knew two ladies who *could* hurry from their rooms, especially when one was a bride newly made? So Charley wandered up and down for some time, impatiently and aimlessly.

The first of the party who appeared, descending from the upper regions, was Colonel Withers. The latter gentleman at once linked arms with Charley and walked with him up and down the hall. As the colonel was tall and indulged in immense strides, and as Charley was short and walked with little steps, the performance was amusing. Charley hopped, skipped, and jumped in his efforts to keep up with the colonel, until the usual topic with which conversation commences, the weather, had been exhausted, and then he deliberately stood still.

"By the way," said the colonel as they halted, "you are a friend of Colonel Smith?"

"Friend of Jonas!" exclaimed Charley. "Of course I am."

"Of course," added the colonel; "but have you known him for any length of time?"

"Ever since I was knee-high to a grasshopper," responded Charley.

"He's a clever young man," said the colonel, half-way between asking a question and making an assertion.

"A better fellow doesn't live," replied Charley.

"He's rather modest about relating his military adventures," suggested the colonel.

"Eh?" said Charley.

"Yes," added the colonel; "though we requested him to tell us about them, he absolutely declined to do so."

Charley laughed.

"Why do you laugh?" asked the colonel, severely.

"Oh, merely at the thought that Jonas had refused to relate his military adventures."

"Ah," said the colonel; "but how did he become a colonel?"

Charley chuckled, but just at that moment they were joined by the ladies. Kitty looked refreshed, and Mrs. Hastrom looked as if she were ready for a hearty laugh at any moment, if any one should see fit to provoke it.

The colonel was introduced to Mrs. Hastrom, and after he had indulged in some old-fashioned gallant remarks he returned to the charge.

"You haven't told me yet, Mr. Hastrom," said he, "how your friend Colonel Smith became a colonel."

"Oh, but the ladies are not in the least interested in such military memoirs," responded Charley.

"But I am," said Miss Kitty.

"And I, too," said Mrs. Becky; "for though I have often heard you speak of Colonel Smith, I never heard you praise his military achievements."

"No, I should think not," replied Charley. "Well —"

He was just on the point of relating the true story of Jonas' title, when the colonel interrupted him.

"You see," said the colonel, "I made Colonel Smith's acquaintance, solely on the ground that he was a military man, and I naturally feel interested in knowing how he became one."

"Phew!" said Charley to himself, as he listened to that remark and noticed the eager look in Kitty's eyes and the bright blush on her cheeks, "it will never do to spoil sport here. It's evident that the old gentleman would cut Jonas dead, if he knew the truth, and then, judging from the present appearance of things, Miss Kitty would pine away. I must draw on my imagination."

"Well," suggested the colonel, "I suppose he did something or other which was valuable."

"Took something," replied Charley.

"A fort?" asked Miss Kitty.

"An army?" suggested Mrs. Becky.

Charley was half-inclined to say, No, a drink; but he refrained.

"Well," continued he, "I'll tell you how it was. Jonas was always a pleasant fellow (Kitty's eyes made response

to that), and so he was elected captain of the company with which he started. He went through several skirmishes and one or two battles; so that, as he told me, he became quite accustomed to thinking, and thinking quickly, amid the falling shot and shells."

"That's the true soldier's quality," interrupted the colonel.

"Well," continued Charley, somewhat astonished at his powers of invention, "at the battle of Antietam, the colonel of Jonas' regiment left him with two companies on the right flank of his division. Well, there was a battery belonging to the enemy, which was placed almost directly opposite his position, and which was making sad havoc in the centre of the army. The general asked what regiment held the right flank.

"'The Sixty-sixth,' replied an aide.

"'Then,' said the general, 'tell the commanding officer of the Sixty-sixth to silence that battery.'

"The aide rushed up and crying out, 'Sixty-sixth, silence that battery,' galloped away.

"Of course, the general, when he gave that order, did not know that only two companies of the Sixty-sixth held that position; but," continued Charley, wondering what the mischief a military man would do under such circumstances, "what could Jonas do?"

"Obey orders," said the colonel, sternly.

"Precisely," said Charley, very much relieved by the suggestion. "That is exactly what Jonas did. 'Boys,' said he, the 'general has given us a tough job in ordering us to silence that battery, but we can do it, and now forward.'"

"Good," said the colonel, quite worked up. "That's the way, short and sweet."

"The two companies," continued Charley, "advanced against that battery, left a large number of the men on the field, drove the enemy from the battery, and, as they were not numerous enough to hold the position, they — they — "

"Spiked the guns," cried the colonel.

"Yes," replied Charley, "spiked the guns."

"That was grand," said the colonel. "Eh, Kitty?"

"It was heroic," replied Kitty.

"A noble act," added Mrs. Becky.

"And the result?" asked the colonel.

"Then," said Charley, becoming somewhat interested in his own narrative, "his conduct was reported at head-quarters, and, as at that time they were organizing some colored regiments, they put him in command of one of these regiments, and gave him his colonelcy."

"I'm very glad I've met him," said the colonel; "I'll talk with him about that adventure."

"O my dear colonel," cried Charley, "not for worlds. What I have told you is to be kept in the strictest confidence. None of you must mention the matter, for, if he should discover that I had told that story, he would never speak to me again."

"But — " said the colonel.

"No," interrupted Charley, "no buts; you must all promise not to speak to him about that."

So they all promised to keep the story to themselves.

Just then Jonas approached. It was astonishing how

great a respect Charley's auditors had developed for Jonas. The colonel was as social as ever he had been, Miss Kitty allowed her eyes to rest upon Jonas with an expression that could not be mistaken, and even Mrs. Becky looked at him admiringly.

"I came," said Jonas, "to ask you all to come out on the piazza; the mountain-top gleams magnificently in the moonbeams."

As Jonas walked away with Miss Kitty on one side of him and Mrs. Becky on the other, Charley thought: —

"What a fool I've been! — I've woven a cord to hang myself with, dug a pit to bury myself in. Even my wife admires him for the heroic deed I've made him do. Thank Heaven, however, if she should admire him too much, I can tell her the truth, can explain to her how history is written."

CHAPTER XI.

AT THE MOUNTAINS.

Our party had reached their destination. There is a sort of feeling of relief when you reach the spot at which you aimed, which is akin, though not exactly like, the feeling which the traveller experiences when he sits down at home. Our party had reached as it were their temporary home, and they now had time to think and be at ease. It was the mid-

dle of July, and yet, as night closed in, so cool was the atmosphere that a fire in the immense stove in the office became a necessity. It was the night of all nights for a dance.

So the manager of the establishment seemed to think, for he roused up the band and set them to playing lively galops or stately quadrilles. Mr. and Mrs. Hastrom had not been married long enough to eschew the pleasures of the dance, and Miss Kitty was a devotee of Terpsichore. Jonas did not in the least object to that, so long as she danced with him, but Charley Hastrom and Mr. Brown both had male friends at the hotel. Now it was not to be supposed that a dancing man would fail to get an introduction to Miss Kitty, if he happened to know one of her acquaintances. Anyhow the gentlemen were soon swarming around her, and she whirled in the " mazes of the giddy " with many of them.

To say that Jonas did not like that would be to put it mildly. Just exactly what his feelings were he hardly knew himself. He had been the sole escort of Miss Kitty for so long a time, that he somehow felt that the new comers were trespassing on his proprietorship or something, exactly what he hardly knew. Of course he admitted to himself he knew that such a thing must happen whenever she appeared in society, for somehow men have a way of forcing an acquaintance with a beautiful girl in one way or another. He sighed for Centre Harbor, and wished that she might dance and stroll with him alone as she had on the preceding evening. That could not be, however, and so he went over to Mrs. Hastrom and danced with her.

Just what his feelings towards Miss Withers were he could hardly determine. That he liked her amazingly was beyond all question; that he desired to be with her and to monopolize her attentions was also beyond all question; but whether that was a permanent feeling he was unable to say. Of course he readily admitted that it would not do to attempt to monopolize her now, and so, when he had finished his dance with Mrs. Hastrom, he resolved to sit where he could watch Miss Kitty without her knowledge.

At that moment she was dancing in a quadrille; her cavalier was attentive, but she seemed *distraite;* the smile which came to her face was evidently forced there out of respect to the gentleman; she went through the dance somewhat mechanically. All this Jonas saw, or at least thought he saw, and another thing he thought he saw, that, when her cavalier escorted her to a seat, she looked at Jonas wistfully, as if she wished that he would relieve her. Interpreting her glance in that way, Jonas approached her, and, watching her carefully, he thought that he detected a smile of welcome creep over her face as he drew near.

"Will you promenade, Miss Withers?" asked he.

"With pleasure," replied she, rising and bowing to her late partner.

They moved slowly through the parlor and out into the hall. Kitty's face had resumed its usual smile, and her eyes sparkled with merriment.

"Is that the way you desert old friends?" asked she.

"Desert them?" asked he.

"Yes," replied Kitty, "dance once with them, and then leave them for the rest of the evening."

"But there are other gentlemen who desire to dance with you, and so I cannot monopolize your society."

"No; but once in an evening is not monopolizing."

Jonas looked down into her face until her eyes fell.

"Well," said he, "let's promenade all the way to the other end of the hall, and then, when we come back, I'll show you the mysteries of the stove."

"Of the stove?" interrupted she.

"Of course. Isn't a big fire in July a curiosity?"

"To be sure," replied she, gayly, "and what then?"

"Then I'll let you look out of the window at the stars."

"Oh, what a particular favor!" exclaimed she in burlesque enthusiasm, —"and then?"

"And then I'll let you look at your own name in the register."

"How very kind! — and then?"

"And then, if you'll let me, I'll take you back to the parlor and dance a waltz with you, before I surrender you to the surrounding heathen."

"Agreed, and now let the curtain go up and the performance begin."

Before they had reached the office on their return through the hall, Charley and his wife met them, and they walked along together.

"Arent you coming into the parlor?" asked Mrs. Becky.

"Well," said Miss Kitty, "Colonel Smith has promised to explain to me the mystery of the stove."

"The mystery of the stove?" said Charley.

"Precisely," said Miss Kitty.

"My dear," said Charley to his wife, as he stood before the party and halted them all, "you are now a married woman."

"I am well aware of that," said Mrs. Becky.

"That's only the preamble," said Charley. "In the course of your married life there is nothing which you will need to understand so much as stoves. Here's a lecture which is about to be wasted on Miss Withers, concerning the mystery of stoves. Beg her on your bended knees to allow you to attend."

Jonas and Kitty laughed heartily.

"You can all attend," said Kitty, "though I don't believe you will get much information."

Charley's countenance fell when Jonas informed him that all he intended to show them was the sight of people hugging a stove in the middle of July.

"Well, I never," said Charley. "Mrs. Hastrom," added he, "Colonel Smith is a humbug on stoves."

Colonel Withers appeared at this juncture, and suggested to Kitty that it was late.

"But, papa," said she, "I have promised Colonel Smith a waltz."

"Well," said the colonel, "only one."

So they went back to the parlor and danced the waltz.

CHAPTER XII.

MOUNT WASHINGTON.

As everybody has visited Mount Washington, it would be a work of supererogation on my part to describe that famous natural curiosity, and I therefore refrain from entering into any details in regard to it.

Jonas and Charley had always been devotees of the art of walking, and Mount Washington, with its broad carriage-road, was too tempting a field for them to neglect it; so, on the following morning, Jonas tempted Charley to undertake the feat.

"But let's see what Becky says," added Charley.

So they hunted up Mrs. Becky, and that little lady not only approved of the proceeding, but insisted upon accompanying them.

"But, Mrs. Hastrom," urged Jonas, "you will not be able to stand the exertion."

"Oh, you don't know what a great walker I am," replied she.

"That's so, Jonas," added Charley. "She's no end of a walker. I think the walk is just within her powers. It will lay her up for a week," added he, *sotto voce*, "but that's her business, not ours."

Forth Jonas and Charley and Mrs. Becky started; on the piazza they found Colonel Withers and Miss Kitty.

"Whither away?" inquired Kitty.

"We are going up the mountain," replied Jonas.

"And you never asked me," said she.

"But, Miss Withers, we are going to walk up, and that is no child's play."

"Still Mrs. Hastrom goes."

"Oh, Charley promises that his wife will do it with ease."

"But I am a good walker, too."

"Then, if you will go, we shall be delighted to have you accompany us."

"I'll ask papa."

So she informed Colonel Withers that she desired to walk up the mountain.

"Yes, but I don't," replied he; "I prefer to ride."

"But I am going with Mrs. Hastrom."

"Oh, that alters the case. You can go, of course, if you wish."

"Wait," cried she to the party, "till I get my wraps."

"Take only a light shawl, Kitty," said Colonel Withers. "When on the march one should not carry too much baggage."

So a merry party of four started for the top of Mount Washington. They had gone but a short distance beyond the toll-gate, when Charley cried out: —

"Halt!"

Everybody stopped, and three of the party looked at the fourth in astonishment.

"Now for the plan of the campaign," said Charley.

"Plan of the campaign?" inquired Kitty.

"Exactly," replied Charley; "that's the way your father and Colonel Smith would put it."

"Don't let's have any plan," suggested Mrs. Becky. "It's jollier to go without one."

"So I think," added Kitty.

"Who ever heard of a successful campaign," said Charley, "when there wasn't a plan?"

"Come," interposed Jonas, "let Charley develop his plan, and if we don't like it, why, as there are three of us, we'll bind him hand and foot, and leave him here till our return."

"Agreed," cried Mrs. Becky.

"The wife of my bosom!" ejaculated Charley, with such a doleful expression of countenance that everybody else laughed heartily.

"Well, Mr. Hastrom," urged Kitty, "please exhibit that plan."

"Then," said Charley, "I want it to be understood that this is a mutual assistance campaign."

"To be sure it is," assented Kitty.

"I make no resistance to that," said Mrs. Becky.

"Exactly," said Charley; "the men assist each other, and the ladies do likewise. So that, madame," turning to Mrs. Becky, "if you grow weak, Miss Withers will be compelled to carry you."

"All right, Charley," said Mrs. Becky, "and now come along, and by the way give me your arm."

Everybody laughed at this conclusion of Charley's plan, even Charley joining in. The result, however, was, that Charley and his wife walked together, and Jonas and Miss Kitty were left to the society of each other.

The road runs for a long time almost entirely through the woods; only occasionally could views be obtained, and the day was uncommonly warm; so that it is not strange that Mrs. Becky became exhausted before the party reached the half-way house. In fact by the time they reached that structure Charley, notwithstanding his plan of the campaign, was almost carrying his wife. On consultation they resolved to halt there. As they sat there, looking at each other somewhat dolefully, a stage, which was going up the mountains, arrived there. As there happened to be four vacant seats in it, the four great walkers were glad to hide themselves within its shelter.

When they reached the top, Charley insisted that their first duty was to look after the inner man.

"And inner woman," added Mrs. Becky.

"That's a corollary," said Charley, "for no woman was ever known to starve to death, while victuals were in her neighborhood."

"Was a man?" inquired Kitty, laughing.

"I can imagine a man honest enough to starve to death while in the midst of food belonging to others."

"Wonderful man!" ejaculated Kitty.

"And his name isn't Charley Hastrom," added Jonas. "So, Charley, lead the way to the dining-room."

After dinner they scrambled around among the rocks, and

examined the magnificent views spread out before them. Kitty and Jonas sat down and gazed silently upon the scene nature had tinted in glowing colors. Charley and Mrs. Becky, however, kept moving from one spot to another, a momentary glance at each view apparently satisfying them.

"Miss Withers," said Jonas, "it was a fortunate thing for me that I met you in Boston. I have had a very pleasant trip in your company."

"Yes," replied Kitty, half musing; "it's like those streams yonder. See, they come from the east and west, and then they approach each other and run side by side."

"But they separate again."

"To meet once more in the great ocean," added Kitty.

"New York?" suggested Jonas.

Kitty merely bowed her head.

"Hollo, Jonas," cried Charley, who was standing on a rock quite near to them, "stop spooning there, and come over and see the locomotive."

Jonas offered Kitty his hand to assist her in climbing over the rocks, and they went over to the depot.

They watched the locomotive as it slowly ascended the steep incline, and just before it had reached the top Charley suggested that it would be a brilliant idea for them to secure their seats in the coach before the incoming passengers had had an opportunity to occupy them. His advice seemed good, and so they followed it. On the way down they witnessed one of the strangest phenomena of the mountain. While they had watched the locomotive the clouds had gathered, and, almost immediately after they had

started on their homeward trip, they had the pleasure of witnessing a thunder-shower, which was all below them. Before they reached the Glen, however, the shower had ceased; and when they rolled up to the hotel the sun was shining brightly.

CHAPTER XIII.

BREAKING UP.

WHEN our pedestrians reached the hotel they stood near the desk for a few moments.

"Are you not Colonel Smith?" asked the clerk of Jonas.

Now, Jonas, for some years, had been accustomed to answer to that name quite readily; but, on the present occasion, feeling that Kitty's eyes were on him, he blushed slightly as he replied that he was.

"Then," said the clerk," I have a telegram for you."

Jonas glanced over it; and, as he read it, so strong an expression of pain passed over his face that Kitty noticed it.

"Surely," asked she, "it is nothing unpleasant?"

"Only a summons to New York," replied he, as he crushed it in his hand.

"Oh, I am so sorry."

Jonas' face quite lit up as he replied: —

"And so am I."

"Must you go at once?"

"To-morrow morning; but that will not prevent me from waltzing with you to-night, if you will let me."

"Oh, that is a matter of course. The departing friend should always be favored."

When Colonel Withers was informed of the intended departure of Jonas he expressed his regrets in polite terms.

"But, sir," said he, "if there is one thing which I admire above all things, it is a devotion to duty in young men. Ah, colonel, the army is the real school."

Jonas admitted that it was.

"To tell you the truth," continued the colonel, "I wish I was going to New York myself. I don't find much pleasure in this tramping around the country."

Charley Hastrom was almost inconsolable when Jonas informed him that he should depart on the morrow."

"But, my dear fellow," expostulated he, "you mustn't, —you really mustn't. What am I to do with Becky?"

"Do with Becky?" inquired Jonas.

"Of course. You see I've had no experience in the married line."

"Nor have I," suggested Jonas.

"No, but two nincompoops are always better than one. Now, if I had been married three or four times before, I should know what to do with a wife under the trying circumstances of a wedding-tour; but, as it is, when I am left alone as it were in this great barn of a hotel, I shall not know what to do with her."

"Charley," said Jonas, "don't worry about that. She's

a woman, and she'll take care that you look after her amusement."

"I hadn't thought of that," said Charley.

"Besides," continued Jonas, "I leave you Miss Withers and her father."

"That's all very well," said Charley; "but in two days we leave for Canada, and I had intended to take you with us."

"Poor benedict!" exclaimed Jonas, laughingly.

It is to be feared that Jonas did not remember on that evening that it was only one waltz that he had bargained for. It must be admitted, however, that the temptation was strong. A beautiful girl, whom you may be leaving forever and whom you are certainly parting from for the time being, is very loadstoneish, and you are liable to run your waltz into a galop, and a quadrille, and another waltz and galop, and so on *ad infinitum*, if an evening would only last forever. Jonas took his last promenade up and down the hall by Miss Kitty's side, and wished that the hall was miles long. Finally the dread hour of parting came; he escorted Miss Kitty to her room-door, the colonel following behind with Mr. and Mrs. Hastrom.

"I have had some very pleasant hours with you, Miss Withers," said Jonas.

"Ah, but Colonel Smith," said she, "remember how much papa and I owe you."

"And I am very sorry to part with you."

"Till we meet again," said she, gayly.

"I hope so."

"Have you said good-by to papa?" asked she.

"No," replied he. "I shall do so in the morning. And you?"

"Oh," replied she, "I'll say good-by in the morning, if you will let me."

His face apparently showed whether he would let her or not.

By this time they had reached Kitty's room. She held her hand out to Jonas, let it rest for a moment in his as she said: —

"Good-night, but not good-by."

Then she flitted into her room.

Jonas went to his room, but not to sleep. He lit a cigar, sat down in an easy-chair, planted his feet on the window-sill, and gazed into vacancy. As he sat there he was ready to rise up and curse business. Of course he admitted that business must be attended to, but still he wished that the man who invented business had been strangled in his childhood. Why couldn't his client have selected some other time to get into difficulties? There he was, just becoming acquainted with a charming girl, the most charming he had ever met, and then this infernal business had the presumption to step in and interfere. However, as he became a little calm under the influence of his cigar, he was compelled to admit that after all perhaps the interruption was a good thing; just where he was drifting he didn't know. That he admired Miss Kitty immensely was beyond all question, but was he prepared to fall in love with her; was he already in love with her? Pshaw! How did he know? He never was good at conundrums, and so he threw away his cigar and bundled into bed.

In the morning all our friends were on hand to see Jonas off. Miss Kitty had rather a solemn face when she said good-by; the colonel, on the other hand, was quite cheerful, shook Jonas heartily by the hand, and hoped that Jonas would drop in on him when he returned to the city, which Jonas assured him he would do. Mrs. Hastrom bore up quite well under the affliction of losing the company of Mr. Jonas Smith, but Charley was very mournful, — so mournful in fact that, while sitting at the feet of Mrs. Hastrom, he, in a fit of absence of mind, took off that lady's slipper, and threw it after Jonas as the stage rolled away.

"Well," exclaimed Mrs. Hastrom; "that's delightful."

"That's for good luck, my dear," explained Charley.

"But my shoe has dropped in a puddle."

"Oh, well, water's cheap, my dear," added he, as he went after the slipper.

It was quite as lively at the hotel after the departure of Jonas as it had been before, but the party seemed broken up. Miss Kitty could, if she had wished, have danced innumerable dances on every evening, but apparently she did not wish to do so, for she spent the greater part of the evenings walking up and down the halls with her father. Two days after the departure of Jonas, Charley and his wife started for Canada, and then the place became unbearably tiresome to Kitty; so that, on the day after the departure of the Hastroms, Kitty suggested to her father that she was tired of the place. So was the colonel, and so the only question remaining was where should they go. Kitty rather timidly suggested home, but the colonel jumped at that

proposition so eagerly that Kitty rushed off at once to pack up.

CHAPTER XIV.

KITTY'S HOME.

I HAVE spoken well of Boston, and, now that we have reached New York, let me sing its praises; that is, I want you to imagine that I have said everything in its favor that can be said about a city. It is a charming place, and is surrounded by charming suburbs. There is no more delightful spot for a residence, in New York or elsewhere, than the long tongue of land which stretches from Manhattanville to King's bridge, along the east bank of the Hudson river. There are quite enough of the elements of country life, trees and fields and green meadows, to make the place romantic, and just enough of the conveniences of city life to save one from the thousand-and-one little annoyances which accompany a residence in the rural districts. Your villa is built on the crown of a hill or on its gentle slope, and from its windows you can view the noblest of our rivers and the thousands of vessels that float lazily on, or steam hastily through its bosom, or you can raise your eyes, and gaze in wonder at the majestic palisades, which rear their crests directly opposite.

Colonel Withers had selected a house which was located quite near to the water's edge. It was built in Gothic style, and yet, on the side facing the river, it had an immense bay-window, from which one could observe the stream in both directions. There were a half-dozen neighbors within a stone's throw on all sides except one; but their gardens were allowed to run into each other, without any unsightly fences to mark the boundary lines, thus forming a sort of park, which could be used at will by all the residents. The colonel was a man of wealth, and Kitty a girl of taste, so that the inside of the house was quite as sightly as the exterior. The room with the great bay-window had been selected by Kitty as her sitting-room; here she passed her leisure hours, and here she received her favored visitors. The floor was covered with a bright, cheerful carpet, the walls were adorned with choice pictures, and — luxury of luxuries! — every chair in the room was an easy-chair. Instead of a stove or heater the fireplace was adorned with one of those low grates, in which the blazing cannel coal in the winter made the room doubly cheerful.

The colonel and his daughter had been at home two weeks. They were sitting in Kitty's room, the colonel examining the evening paper, while Kitty was thoughtlessly dog-earing a novel, which lay in her lap; evidently she was day-dreaming. Finally, the colonel laid his paper down quietly, and watched his daughter for a few moments. He shook his head gravely, and then opened the conversation.

"Kitty," said the colonel.

"Eh, papa?" said she, waking out of her dreams.

"Kitty," continued the colonel, "am I not a kind father?"

"O papa," cried she, jumping up, going to him and placing her arm over his shoulder, "you are the best, the kindest of fathers."

"Then," said he, placing her on his knee, "how is it that my Kitty is so low-spirited, and does not tell her father the reason?"

"But I am not low-spirited, papa."

"Don't I see it, Kitty? Didn't you formerly laugh and sing, and romp about the house, and are you not now as demure as a wearied kitten? Something is the matter, I'm sure, and we'll call in the doctor."

"Oh, no, papa! I'm not ill."

"What is it, then, Kitty?"

"It's — it's — I suppose it's the sudden change from the busy life we led, while travelling."

"Then we'll go travelling again."

"Oh, no, papa," cried Kitty; "I'll be all right again in a day or two."

"Well, well, we'll see," said the colonel. "By the way, Kitty," continued he, "isn't it queer that our friend, Colonel Smith, has not yet called on us?"

The colonel was watching Kitty, but she was not aware of that fact, and so her face assumed quite a mournful expression as she answered: —

"I suppose he has forgotten us."

"Yet," mused the colonel, "I invited him to call on us, cordially too, and he accepted eagerly enough, I thought. Didn't he, Kitty?"

"I believe so," replied she, sighing slightly.

"Well, then, to-morrow, I'll drop in at his office, and find out why he hasn't called on me."

Kitty's eyes flashed eagerly for a moment, — a bright blush dyed her cheek; but then she threw up her head proudly and suggested: —

"I think, papa, that if he had wanted to come he could have come on your invitation, and it is hardly necessary for you to trouble yourself to invite him again."

"There's something in that," said the colonel. "Nevertheless I'll call on him to-morrow, and now Kitty go to the piano and sing something for me."

Just as the colonel had finished that remark a servant entered the room, and handed the colonel a card. The colonel took it and read aloud, "Jonas Smith."

Kitty stood still, leaning against the piano; her eyes brightened, and then she half started forward as if she would have liked to have taken that card, and — well, read it herself.

"Show Colonel Smith in," said Colonel Withers.

"Here, papa?" inquired Kitty.

"Yes. Why not?" asked the colonel.

"Oh, I don't know," replied Kitty, brightening up rapidly.

Jonas entered; the colonel received him courteously, but Kitty was quite distant and dignified in her manner. Jonas, who remembered her freedom and kindness at the mountains, was decidedly taken aback. Colonel Withers, however, was cheerful, and chatted with Jonas about the news of the day.

"How long have you been at home?" finally inquired Jonas of Kitty.

"Two weeks," replied she, looking at him reproachfully.

"And all that time I have been in Chicago," said he.

"Been where?" inquired she.

"You know," continued he, "I received a message at the Glen, calling me home."

"Why, yes, I recollect that."

"Well, as soon as I reached New York I was compelled to leave for Chicago."

"And you have been there ever since?" asked the colonel.

"Ever since."

"And when did you return?" asked Kitty.

"This very day," replied Jonas.

Kitty immediately laid aside her dignity and assumed her old, cheerful manner; Jonas began to feel more at his ease; even the colonel saw that Kitty was recovering her former spirits.

"And now, Kitty," said the colonel, "give me that song we were talking about."

"By all means," said Jonas.

So Jonas and Kitty went to the piano, and Kitty sang her father's favorite song in her low, sweet voice. Then Jonas and Kitty sang duets and solos, until the colonel commenced to snore gently. The bay-window was very inviting, so they sat there looking out at the moonlit river, and chatting gayly about the incidents of their summer trip — even laughing merrily about their attempt to ascend Mount Washington on foot.

"And Mrs. Hastrom," asked Jonas, —"have you forgotten her ladyship?"

"Oh, dear ,no," replied Kitty, "nor Mr. Hastrom either. He and she are much too amusing to allow one to forget either of them."

"Have you called on them?" asked he.

"No; but Mrs. Hastrom has called on me since my return, and I propose to call on her to-morrow."

"Then, Miss Kitty — I may say Miss Kitty, mayn't I?"

"Oh, of course, if you wish."

"Then, Miss Kitty," continued Jonas, "I wish you would let me drive you down to-morrow, and bring you back in the evening. It will be moonlight till midnight, you know."

"I should like that very much," said Kitty, "if papa does not object."

Colonel Withers awoke, and Jonas prepared to depart. The colonel saw no objection to the proposed visit, and Jonas went away.

CHAPTER XV.

MR. AND MRS. HASTROM AT HOME.

Jonas did not hurry himself when he went to Colonel Withers' house on the following day; in fact he dallied on the way, for he had arranged with Charley Hastrom to man-

age things, so as to reach Charley's house at dinner-time. You see Jonas had made up his mind to ride home with Miss Kitty by moonlight. It was therefore late in the afternoon when Jonas and Kitty started on their journey. The drive was delightful. The Bloomingdale road is (or rather was, for the march of improvement, as they call it, is levelling and straightening and curbing and guttering it) one of the most charming roads in existence.

Charley Hastrom had located his household gods in a modest brick house in Thirtieth street, near enough, as he said, to down town to enable a fellow to walk home when he got tired of holding on to car-straps. Jonas and Kitty arrived there in due time, and were heartily welcomed by Charley and his wife.

"What a lucky thing," said Charley, for all the world, as if he had not arranged it beforehand with Jonas, "that you dropped in at dinner-time!"

"Yes," said Jonas; "and Miss Withers is fearfully hungry."

"Well, the truth is," said Charley, pretending that he did not see Mrs. Hastrom, who was entering the door, "it's dinner time, but, bless you! there's no certainty about there being any dinner. We make a practice, however, of sitting down to the table, merely to keep the plates in countenance; you see, Becky isn't much of a cook."

"What's that, Charley?" cried Mrs. Becky.

"Oh, you're there!" said Charley. "Well I was remarking that you are an exquisite cook."

"How my ears must have deceived me!" exclaimed Mrs.

Becky. "But come, Kitty," added she, "I've just time before dinner to show you the house."

So Becky and Mrs. Kitty retired to the upper regions, leaving Jonas with Charley.

"Well, Charley," asked Jonas, "how does married life agree with you?"

"That's what I'm trying to find out," answered Charley. "You see I've been deprived of all my old luxuries."

"Old luxuries?" ejaculated Jonas.

"Of course," replied Charley.

"Could you conveniently explain?" asked Jonas.

"To be sure. You see, I'm not allowed even to sew on a button."

"What cruelty!"

"If I tear my coat or unmentionables, bless your soul, before I can hunt up a needle, Becky has the rip quite under control."

"Can it be possible?"

"To be sure; and thus you see I am deprived of the opportunity of ventilating the choice collection of swears, which I was accustomed to use whenever I stuck a needle in my finger."

"That is a real injury."

"Not a doubt of that. And, last and worst, I am not allowed to smoke in the parlor."

"That is really shameful."

"Oh, matrimony has its bad points, I can assure you."

That was too much for Mrs. Becky and Kitty, who were standing in the door-way, and so they exploded into a laugh.

"We'll finish that discussion at the table, if you please, Charley," said Mrs. Becky, "and go to dinner."

The dinner-table somewhat belied Charley's statements; and I would here describe it for your benefit, only it is not given to every one to be able to tell a story and write a cook-book, too. That particular sort of ability is inherent only in a Dumas. Certain it is that they had a very merry time over their dinner, and Charley did not act at all as if his chief duty at the table had been to keep the plates in countenance.

After dinner Charley planted himself in an easy-chair, and thus relieved his mind: —

"Ladies and gentlemen, — gentleman, I mean, as there is only one of you."

"For mercy's sake, Charley," exclaimed Mrs. Hastrom, "don't afflict us with a speech."

"My dear," said Charley, calmly, "you should not interrupt me. When a woman possesses a husband who can make a speech on the slightest provocation, she ought to give him the provocation."

"Oh, let him finish it," said Jonas.

"Yes," said Kitty, "I have always admired eloquence, and I'm sure that Mr. Hastrom is about to say something very eloquent."

"Please consider that I have bowed to you, Miss Withers," said Charley; "and now to continue. We have been married such a short time that I really think that, on this occasion, I can look upon myself as the host. How it will be a year from now, Heaven only knows."

"Oh, I'll try to accommodate you before that time, and suppress you sufficiently," said Mrs. Becky.

"No doubt," said Charley. "Well, it falls on the host to suggest means of entertainment."

"If he can," said Jonas.

"Of course," said Charley; "and now let me sketch the plan of the campaign."

"As well as you did the Mount Washington one?" asked Kitty.

"That was brilliant enough in suggestion," said Charley, "but, unfortunately, the weaker vessels gave out."

Mrs. Becky and Kitty laughed heartily at the recollection of the Mount Washington trip.

"What I propose is this," said Charley. "The minstrel halls are the only places of amusement now open. Mrs. Becky is dying to visit one of them."

"Oh, of course," interrupted Mrs. Becky, "I am dying for that."

"Don't interrupt," said Charley. "We'll go around to the minstrels for an hour or so, then we'll return here for an hour, and then, at eleven, Jonas and Miss Withers shall be sent on their way rejoicing."

"But, papa," suggested Kitty, "will he not be frightened at my delay?"

"Pooh!" said Charley; "he knows that you are in good hands."

Kitty's scruples were overruled, and the party went to the minstrel hall, laughed till they were tired, and then returned to Charley's house.

CHAPTER XVI.

MRS. HASTROM GROWS CONFIDENTIAL.

When they had returned to Charley's house, that gentleman insisted upon getting up, as he said, a little concert on their own hook; so they sang solos, and duets, and quartets *ad libitum*. Mrs. Hastrom was apparently thinking of nothing but the performances which were going on; in reality she was watching Jonas. Presently, while Kitty was singing, she placed her hand on Jonas' arm and walked down the room with him.

"Colonel Smith," said she, "I should like to speak with you for a moment or two."

Jonas stood still and looked at Mrs. Hastrom, wondering what her solemn tone presaged.

"With me?" asked Jonas, still looking somewhat astonished.

"If you will let me," replied she, in a half-apologetic tone.

"Certainly I will," replied Jonas.

"And you will not be offended?" asked she, rather eagerly.

"Not a bit. Offended!" continued he. "Why, you and

Charley are my best friends, and I would be a brute to be offended at anything you can say."

"That is it;" added she, "we are friends, but then we have other friends also. Now I have become quite attached to Kitty Withers. She is a dear, affectionate girl, and I really cannot stand by and see her trifled with."

"Trifled with!" ejaculated Jonas.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Becky. "You see Charley has told me that you delight in flirting with any charming woman."

"Then he has misrepresented me," said Jonas.

"Do you mean that you are, — you are not flirting with Kitty Withers?"

"Most certainly I am not."

"Why!" exclaimed she, "do you mean, — that is, do you really love her?"

"Better than my life."

"And you mean to marry her?"

"The minute she will let me."

"Oh, it's all right then. What a fool I've made of myself! To tell you the truth, however, I really thought that it was one of your flirtations."

"But it is not."

"And I am delighted to hear you say so."

"But now it's my turn," said Jonas, smiling. "Tell me just one thing. Does Miss Kitty love me?"

"How do I know?" asked she, shrugging her shoulders.

"Then why did you ask me those questions?"

"That's true," replied she, somewhat nonplussed.

"And now tell me," urged he.

Just at that moment Kitty ceased playing, and turned around on the piano-stool, so that her face was turned towards the speakers, while she listened to Charley's chat.

"What fools you men are!" said Mrs. Becky, laughing.

"Undoubtedly," said Jonas; "but that is no answer to my question."

"Look yonder," said Mrs. Becky. "Charley is doing his best to entertain Miss Withers, isn't he?"

"Apparently."

"And where are her eyes looking?"

"Over here."

"And their expression?"

"Certainly not unfavorable."

"Well, that isn't for me, I suppose."

"Thanks," cried Jonas; "I'll ask her this very night, while I am driving her home."

"Oh, no," said Mrs. Becky, "don't do that."

"No?"

"Of course not."

"Why?" asked Jonas.

"I do not say positively that she loves you; and, if she should refuse you, think what a horrible position you would both be in for the rest of the journey."

"That is so," said Jonas, quite chap-fallen.

"Besides," continued Mrs. Becky, "you have known Kitty only a very short time. A woman has pride, and, though won, she does not like to appear to have been too easily won."

"I had not thought of that," said Jonas.

"Of course not," added Mrs. Becky. "Men never do. If you'll take my advice —."

"Oh, with pleasure," interrupted Jonas.

"And follow it?" said Mrs. Becky.

"That's a matter of course," replied Jonas.

"Then," said she, laughing, "I advise you, most solemnly, to have patience."

It was well that their conference was at an end; for Charley and Miss Kitty, wondering what their confidential chat could be about, walked over to where Jonas stood.

"Look here, Jonas," said Charley, "if you are planning an elopement with my wife, you might have the decency to arrange the details during my absence."

"But you ought to look upon such a performance as a pleasure."

"Ought I?" asked Charley, in his most sarcastic way.

"Of course. Then, once more, you could have your bachelor pleasures."

"Sew on your own buttons," suggested Kitty.

"Mend your own coats," added Jonas.

"And smoke in the parlor," suggested Mrs. Becky.

"That's the wife of my bosom," said Charley, dolefully.

"Matrimony has its bad points," suggested Mrs. Becky, in a very solemn tone.

Then everybody laughed, and the conversation changed.

As eleven o'clock was at hand, Jonas and Kitty started forth on their return. Jonas drove rapidly; for, though he had joined the rest of the party in overruling Kitty's objections, now that he was on the way to her home, he feared

that the colonel might object seriously to the late hours which they had kept. Kitty, however, was in high spirits. She had enjoyed her evening immensely, and she told Jonas so frankly. He was strongly tempted, notwithstanding Mrs. Becky's injunctions, to tell Miss Kitty his secret; but he refrained. Moonlight and solitude are fearfully tempting to a lover; but the ideas which Mrs. Becky had put into his head restrained Jonas.

The colonel came out to meet them when they reached Kitty's home; but, instead of making objections, he was so delighted, when he saw that Kitty had regained her spirits, that he even suggested that Jonas should come in and have a chat with them. Jonas, however, resisted the temptation, and drove slowly homeward.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON THE VERGE OF HAPPINESS.

Jonas took care that Miss Kitty should not forget him. As the colonel invited him frankly to visit at his house, why, Jonas used the invitation. Many evenings were spent by him in Kitty's sitting-room; many walks were taken by Jonas and Kitty, and several visits were made by them to Mrs. Hastrom, and even to other people.

When Jonas first met Kitty Withers he had merely

looked upon her as a pleasant acquaintance. Thrown with her constantly, during the few days they spent together, he had developed a sort of admiration for her. When he was called upon to leave the party at the mountains he felt a sort of regret, which he could not then account for. While, however, he was in Chicago, a stranger in a strange city, he learned that Kitty's companionship was necessary for his happiness. When he returned to New York he hastened at once to bask in the sunshine of her smiles.

Jonas, then, was quite certain that he was in love with Miss Kitty, deeply, irretrievably in love; but the more he saw of Kitty, the more uncertain he became as to whether or not she returned his love. Love, you see, is somewhat like swimming. If you spring at once into the water, you find out at once what is to happen; but, if you stand trembling on the edge, you are sure to become so thoroughly demoralized that, when you do go into the water, you are liable to drown. If a man who is in love proposes promptly to the object of his adoration, he may be refused; but then he has saved considerable time in which to effect a cure.

If Mrs. Hastrom had not interfered with Jonas, he would have known his fate long before; but her suggestions had frightened him, and he forbore to ask Miss Kitty the important question. Besides, now that she was in her own home, circumstances were changed from what they had been at the mountains. There he had monopolized her society; here he found that her other friends occupied a large part of her time. He very soon found out that he was not the

only man who looked upon Miss Kitty as a very charming girl. Her friends made up theatre-parties, and riding-parties, and rowing-parties, and, though Jonas was generally invited to go with them, and often accompanied Miss Kitty, still they were parties, and Jonas could by no means monopolize Miss Kitty.

As we have said, Jonas began to fear that Miss Kitty did not love him, and that she never would love him. Other people, however, were not quite so blind. Miss Kitty was a very different sort of a girl from what she had been while Jonas was away. She had quite recovered her spirits, and her father no longer complained of her failure to sing and laugh, for she did nothing else.

"I think, Kitty," said Colonel Withers, one day, "that we had better take another trip."

"Another trip?" said she, astonished.

"Yes. You're getting too noisy and high-spirited. You know when you came back from the mountains you were exceedingly solemn."

"Oh, no, papa," cried she; "I don't want to go away now, and I'll be more sedate, if you wish."

"Not a bit, little one," said he. "Be as merry as you can;" and he kissed her gently on her forehead. "Now run and see why they don't serve up my breakfast."

"Ah," mused the colonel, as she left the room, "they think that I am old, and blind, and can't see what is going on. They forget that, as the Americans say, 'I've been there myself.' No matter, it will come to me finally, for Kitty will not marry without my consent."

One evening Jonas thought that he would call upon his friends, the Hastroms, and consult them, or at least Mrs. Hastrom, as to whether he had better dare all at present, or still wait, not patiently, but impatiently. He found Charley and his wife at home, and, after the formal greetings had been exchanged, he plunged at once into the middle of his subject.

"Mrs. Hastrom," said he, "some time ago you advised me to have patience. Do you still so advise me?"

"To tell you the truth, Colonel Smith," said Mrs. Becky, "I dislike to interfere in such matters."

"You mean about Miss Kitty?" asked Charley.

"Yes," replied Jonas.

"And you still want to marry her?"

"I've told you so a dozen times."

"A dozen! More likely an hundred. Well, my boy, as my wife won't advise you, I will."

"You will?"

"Yes; and here's the advice in short metre: 'Go in and win.'"

"You think —" began Jonas.

"Think!" interrupted Charley. "I don't think anything about it; I know. Women are always won out of hand. Dallying never won a woman. If she doesn't love you very soon after you make her acquaintance, she never will. Look at Mrs. Becky here; she fell in love with me at first sight."

"Nonsense, Charley," said Mrs. Becky.

"Not a bit of nonsense about it," replied Charley. "That's the kind of creatures women are. They don't love a man because he's rich, or distinguished, or handsome, but because

they love him. So you'd better strike in and win Miss Kitty before some other fellow carries her off."

"And you think —" asked Jonas.

"I think," interrupted Charley, "that, when you return here, after asking the momentous question, Becky will play, 'See, the conquering hero comes.'"

"But you, Mrs. Hastrom, what do you say?" asked Jonas. "Remember I have kept quiet, in accordance with your advice, and you really ought to tell me now whether I should continue to keep quiet."

"Well," said Mrs. Hastrom, if I must advise you, I can only repeat Charley's observation, 'Go in and win.'"

Now Jonas had been desiring for a long time to consult the Hastroms, but a man of delicate feelings does not like to talk about such things, even to his most intimate friends; and, besides, he was afraid that Charley would laugh at him. However, he was very glad that he had consulted them, and he put vast confidence in Mrs. Hastrom's advice. On the following evening Jonas met Miss Kitty at a ball. Never had she seemed so dazzlingly beautiful, and most of the young men present seemed to agree with him, for they absolutely swarmed around her. To be sure Jonas danced with her, but Charley's suggestion that some other fellow might rush in and win her kept whirling through his brain, and he resolved that at the earliest moment he would end his suspense.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PROPOSAL.

It must be admitted, of course, that we have all of us been, at some time in our existence, "pilgrims of love.' That's the polite way of putting it, but, alas! too many of us, while pretending to be such, have been really marching to a shrine on which was mounted a golden calf. However, even those of us who really were devotees of Cupid have forgotten the joyous time when we would have sold our souls for a smile. That being the case, I may be pardoned, I think, for dwelling to such an extent upon Jonas' love experiences, and may be excused, if I paint them with a weak hand.

You see a woman differs from a man in this matter. She is happy in the hope of possession; he must possess, must have the thing he desires, at the earliest possible moment. A woman knows, long before a man declares his passion, that he loves her; a man, with his ruder thoughts and feelings, cannot appreciate the delicate thoughts, ideas, notions of a woman. And, besides, a man in love is proverbially blind; so that, even after outsiders have discovered a woman's fancy, the man of her choice will remain ignorant of her preference.

Jonas, however, had firmly resolved that, upon the first opportunity, he would tell his secret to Kitty. Just what he ought to say he hardly knew. Making proposals of this kind was a new business to him; he had often flirted up to that point, but he had never passed it. He was well aware that the heroes in novels always dropped upon their knees, and used language which would adorn the complete letter-writer; but all that seemed to him to be mere claptrap. He did not believe that he could tell his passion any more effectively on his knees than in some more convenient position, and he resolved that he would tell it in the simplest possible manner.

One evening he found Kitty alone; even her father was out. She was in her sitting-room when he entered, sitting silently in the large window, gazing rather mournfully out upon the river; spring had come, but the scene without was still bleak and cheerless. As he entered, she rose and welcomed him.

"I am glad that you have called," said she, very quietly, "for papa has left me alone and I feel —"

"You are not ill, I hope?" asked Jonas.

"Oh, no," said she, smiling.

"Low-spirited, then?" inquired he, as they sat in the window.

"No, not low-spirited, simply musing."

"And may I ask upon what?"

"Friendship. I have parted with a friend to-day."

"A male friend?" asked Jonas, eagerly, fearing that some

other person of his own sex had dared to look with longing eyes upon his goddess.

"Ah, but you are not my confessor," said she, archly.

"Would to Heaven I were!" exclaimed he. "Kitty," continued he, while his blood swelled fiercely in the veins of his face, "I love you better than life. Can you love me a little?"

He gazed eagerly upon her, her eyes were cast down; she raised them slowly to his face, he read his answer in them, seized her in his arms, and pressed burning kisses on her lips.

"Then you do love me a little?" asked he.

"Just a very little," replied she, smiling brightly.

"But you will learn to love me more?"

"No," replied she, looking archly up into his face.

"No?"

"No. That little fills all my heart, and how can I possibly love you any more?"

"Thank you, darling," exclaimed he, as he again pressed her much closer to his bosom than was apparently at all necessary.

Conversation under such circumstances is intended only for those engaged in it, and how can you expect that I, one of the most fastidious of scribes, will dare to present to you any more of it? What they found to say, what lovers usually find to say, under such circumstances, is one of those mysteries which no fellow can find out, unless he has been through the same performance, and even then he has probably forgotten all about it. The weather wont do as a subject for conver-

sation on such an important occasion, and information is so limited, that it seems to me anybody can tell any other body all he knows in a very short period of time. However, they do say that occasional breaks for hugging and kissing enable one to carry on a conversation indefinitely. Those breaks are very much like the refreshment stations on the railroad line; they enable you to go on and on forever.

Whatever our lovers may have talked about, certain it is that three hours glided by unawares; they were finally aroused, however, from their dream of bliss by the noise which Colonel Withers made when he entered the house.

"Oh," said Kitty, "there's papa. You will speak to him to night, won't you, for you know I cannot marry without papa's consent, and I want his approval at once?"

"This very night," replied Jonas.

Then she ran out into the hall, kissed her father good-night, and at once hastened upstairs.

"That's astonishing," muttered the colonel, as he watched Kitty in her upward flight.

Then he entered the sitting-room, but the person he saw there astonished him still more. Hardly had they exchanged salutations, when Jonas commenced the attack.

"Can I have a few moments of your time, colonel?" asked Jonas. "I should like to speak to you about an important matter.

That opened the colonel's eyes, and so he winked one of them gravely.

"Certainly," replied the colonel; "as many moments as

you please." Then, as he seated himself in his easy-chair, he muttered, "Now for some strategy."

"Colonel," said Jonas, "I love your daughter. Will you give her to me?"

"D—n such strategy," muttered the colonel, in an undertone. Then to Jonas he replied, "Well, that's coming to the point with a vengeance."

"It's the better way, I think," answered Jonas.

"Well, sir, does the girl love you?"

"Oh, yes," replied Jonas.

"Hem! Well, I must say that you seem quite confident about that. We'll see what she has to say for herself."

Then he went to the door and called Kitty. She entered, blushing vigorously and walking slowly.

"Kitty," said the colonel, "this young gentleman has the presumption to tell me, right to my face, that you love him."

"But it is true, papa," replied she, quite gravely.

"Oh, it is, eh? Well, then, I don't think that there is anything for me to say."

"Against it you mean, papa?"

"Why, of course, Kitty."

"And now, colonel," said he to Jonas, "if you'll say good-night, I'll send Kitty to bed; and though I don't like to drive you away, still I'll take the liberty of a father-in-law and tell you that it is tolerably late."

"A thousand thanks for your kindness," said Jonas, as he grasped the hand which the colonel extended to him.

Undoubtedly Kitty and Jonas said good-night to their satisfaction under the porch; at least, when Kitty came into

the room, on her return, she threw her arms around her father's neck and whispered in his ear: —

"You dear, kind, good papa!"

CHAPTER XIX.

BASKING IN SUNSHINE.

WERE I to picture here the delights of courtship, after acceptance, I should probably succeed in persuading all the young gentlemen who do me the honor to look over these pages, and who are in that delicate position described as on the fence, to rush off, fling themselves at the feet of their charmers, and beg the aforesaid charmers to name *the* day. Now you really can't imagine that I desire to do anything of that sort at a time like the present, when house-rent is up, and incomes are down, and dresses from Worth's cost their weight in gold. If you do expect anything of that sort, you have mistaken your host. Whatever may be my faults, inveigling young men into matrimonial speculations is not one of them.

Of course I am bound to admit that Jonas and Kitty were extraordinarily happy: Jonas walked on air, as it were; Kitty floated on happiness. It must be borne in mind, however, that it takes very little to make an engaged couple

perfectly happy. All he asks is to be allowed to sit by the side of his darling, to wind his arm around her waist, to look into her eyes, and to suck nectar from her lips; all she asks is to be hugged, and kissed, and to be allowed to parade her lover occasionally, in order that she may show the other girls the fish that has come to her net.

Were I to detail here the walks, the rides, the visits, the excursions on the river, and the innumerable other things, which our lovers did and took, I should simply weary you or make you envious, and I therefore refrain. To them everything seemed bright, and fair, and lovely. They loved each other, they were engaged, and Kitty's father was perfectly satisfied. Was not the outlook charming? and yet—You have seen perhaps a noble ship, sailing in from the broad Atlantic, where, for days, she has been buffeted by the winds and waves. Everything seems fair and bright; the waters are calm, and the winds are favorable; she is about to make her port. Suddenly a wind off shore springs up; it increases in violence, and drives the vessel for safety to sea once more; the wind rises to a hurricane, a tornado, and the vessel, that was so near her port, is driven for days on the broad ocean, the sport of the wind and waves. Fortunate it is for us that we cannot see into the future, not even "as through a glass darkly."

Jonas called at the home of the Hastroms in order to relate to them his good fortune. Mrs. Hastrom was not at home, but Charley was; so Jonas hastened upstairs to Charley's sanctum, where he found that individual, seated in an easy-chair, smoking a cigar, and carelessly turning over

the pages of a magazine. As Jonas entered, Charley burst forth: —

"There, my dear fellow, don't! Restrain yourself! I surmise it all. You went, you saw, you conquered! If Mrs. Hastrom were at home I'd make her play "See, the conquering hero comes," for you. As she isn't, I'll whistle it, if you insist upon it. Take a cigar, and a chair, and how are stocks?"

"Hang stocks!" exclaimed Jonas. "I didn't come here to talk about stocks."

"Of course you didn't," said Charley. "You came here to tell us that you are on the verge of matrimony."

"Precisely," said Jonas.

"Well," said Charley, "Mrs. Hastrom takes charge of that part of the business in this house. Unfortunately she isn't in, but I'll talk stocks with you till she comes."

"You're a nice friend," said Jonas, "a precious nice friend. A fellow comes here to tell you about his happiness, and to permit you to congratulate him —"

"You forget, Jonas," said Charley, "that I'm married."

"And expects," continued Jonas, "that you'll listen to his story; and, by Jove! you burst out with 'How's stock?'"

"Of course I do. You see, Jonas, I've been all through that business myself. I know all about it. I've sighed and ogled, and burned, and yearned, and all that sort of thing, and it's awfully stale to me, especially when it's another fellow's experience. Now I'm interested in stocks, but not a bit in love."

"You're in a nice humor to-night," added Jonas.

However Mrs. Hastrom came in presently, and she listened eagerly to Jonas' confidences. More than that she suppressed Charley, whenever he attempted to interfere.

"Now, Becky," urged Charley, after Jonas had dwelt for a considerable time upon the beauties of his Kitty, "have we not had almost enough of this? Jonas is a little out of his head just now, but a year of matrimony will cure him."

"Has it cured you?" asked Mrs. Becky.

"Perfectly," replied Charley; "all I ask now is that you shall keep buttons on my shirts, and furnish me with substantial meals."

"And that's the effect of matrimony!" ejaculated Jonas.

"Not a doubt of it," replied Charley. "Some day I'll trade Becky off for a trotting-horse."

Becky laughed as if she was not much frightened, and Jonas went away to Kitty.

"The truth is, Becky," said Charley, after Jonas had departed, "you are compelled, for self-protection, to suppress these young fellows who have just started in the love business, or they'll bore you to death with the beauties of their charmers."

Charley's talk, however, did not in the least interfere with the happiness of Jonas. Kitty was willing enough to listen to the raptures of her lover, and Jonas was no wise backwards in painting brilliant pictures of the future. You see, as before suggested, people have not the power of foretelling what is to come, and youth seldom presages disaster to its hopes. If, as he wandered by Kitty's side down some pleasant lane, or floated with her idly on the bosom of the

broad Hudson, a stray thought that such perfect happiness could not last forever darted through his mind, he did not for a moment dream that his cup of bliss could be dashed from his hand by his own act, — that some little sin of omission would rise up and ruin him.

CHAPTER XX.

MAJOR MACKENZIE.

THE most intimate friend of Colonel Withers was a certain Major Mackenzie. He was a fiery little Scotchman; he had stiff red hair on his head, and bristly red hair on his chin and cheeks. He was short, decidedly short; but then his carriage was everything, and any one seeing him walking down the avenue would have imagined that he was at least six feet in height. His temper was not of the sweetest, and his language sometimes travelled outside of the limits of what we call parliamentary usage. The colonel had known the major in the English army. The major, however, had been settled in New York for some time, and he was making a fortune in the wine business.

During the period whose events we have heretofore detailed, the major had been in Europe, visiting, as he said, the Mackenzies. Shortly after the engagement of Jonas and Kitty, however, the major returned to New York, and

Colonel Withers hastened to congratulate him on his arrival, intending, of course, in the interview, to tell the major about the proposed addition to his family in the shape of a son-in-law. After the usual salutations and congratulations were over, the major placed before his guest a bottle of wine and a box of cigars, and they dropped into general conversation.

"And how did you find the Mackenzie family?" asked the colonel.

"Flourishing," replied the major. "They'll never die out. They multiply like rabbits. I brought one of them with me."

"Ah!" said the colonel.

"Yes," replied the major, — "my nephew. You ought to see him."

"I should like to," replied the colonel.

"And you shall," added the major. "He's a lieutenant in her majesty's army, he's six feet in his stockings, and he's a full-blooded Mackenzie, — freckles, and red hair, and all."

"Bring him out with you to the house," said the colonel.

"That's what I mean to do," said the major. "The truth is, colonel, we've been friends for many years."

"Of course we have," interrupted the colonel.

"And he's my only nephew, my nearest relation."

"That comes from your refusing to marry," suggested the colonel.

"I suppose so," said the major; "but I was thinking that we might marry this nephew of mine to your daughter."

"My dear major," exclaimed the colonel, "I'd be delighted, but—

"But what?" cried the major. "Isn't a Mackenzie good enough for you?"

"Of course," replied the colonel; "but the truth is that my daughter is already engaged."

"Oh!" said the major.

"Yes," replied the colonel, "and I came down to consult you about that."

Thereupon the colonel detailed to the major the events which have been heretofore described, and then listened patiently to hear what the major had to say.

"And you say he's a military man?" asked the major.

"Yes," replied the colonel, "he's a colonel."

"Ah!" said the major. "A colonel in her majesty's?"

"Oh, no; an American colonel."

"Just so," suggested the major.

"But a colonel's a colonel," urged Colonel Withers.

"That's as may be," answered the major; "but for my part, I'd rather be a lieutenant in her majesty's army than a brigadier-general here. What's the gentleman's name?"

"Smith," replied the colonel, in an irresolute tone.

"Smith!" exclaimed the major, "Smith! Well, it's lucky that it isn't Brown."

"Why," said the colonel, "there's nothing the matter with the name."

"Nothing that I know of," said the major; "but I'd rather be one Mackenzie than forty Smiths. I hope his Christian name isn't John."

"No," replied the colonel, "it's Jonas."

"Well," said the major, "that's an improvement, if a man can see it. It's a pity, though," added he, shaking his head; "it's a pity!"

"What's a pity?" asked the colonel.

"To throw away such a chance," replied the major.

"What chance?" inquired the colonel.

"Haven't I told you?" exclaimed the major. "Didn't I bring over my nephew specially to marry her? Mightn't she have been a Mackenzie of the Mackenzies!"

"But she might not have liked your nephew."

"Not like him! Don't you give your daughter credit for such beastly taste. Not like a Mackenzie, and he with six feet of legs and body, and the regular Mackenzie hair! Don't you believe it! What kind of a colonel is this Smith?"

"That I don't know," replied the colonel; "he'll never talk about military matters."

"Then he don't know his trade," said the major.

"Do you think so?" asked the colonel, eagerly.

"Not a doubt of it," answered the major. "Where did he get his title?"

Then the colonel detailed the story which Charley had told him, giving the major all the incidents just as Charley had narrated them.

"Hum!" said the major.

"What do you mean by 'hum'?" asked the colonel.

"Now, look here, colonel, did you ever see anything of that sort done in India?"

"No," said the colonel, reflectively.

"Or anywhere else?" asked the major.

"Well," said the colonel, "I can't say that I have."

"None of our fellows ever won their straps in that way," said the major; "it may be all right, but it sounds awfully fishy."

"You don't mean that he isn't a colonel?" urged Colonel Withers.

"I don't say that now," replied the major. "I'll tell you when I see him."

"Well," said the colonel, "I give one of our little dinners next week; come up and see him."

"I'll do so," said the major.

And then the veterans parted.

The colonel went home quite unhappy. Smith was quite a plebeian name, and a colonelcy here was not like a colonelcy in England. And suppose that, after all, Jonas was not a colonel. However, the colonel resolved to permit matters to remain as they were until the major came to the little dinner; and, if the major should discover that Jonas Smith was not a colonel, then — well, the colonel resolved that his proceedings should be summary.

CHAPTER XXI.

A LITTLE DINNER AT THE COLONEL'S.

Colonel Withers was accustomed to have occasional gatherings at his house, which were peculiarly his own, and they invariably took the form of dinners. They were called by him little dinners, because he seldom had at them more than a dozen guests. They were always military assemblages. No one was invited to them, — that is to say, no one of the male sex, — who had not a handle to his name of the military kind. The ladies who attended were the wives of these gallant warriors, and were invited by the colonel merely to keep Kitty in countenance; for he feared that she might feel diffident, while presiding over such an assemblage of veterans, if left without the support of others of her sex.

The colonel insisted upon the proceedings at these little reunions being carried on in a particular manner, and the programme was as follows: the guests arrived shortly before dinner; after dinner the ladies retired from the dining-room, while the gentlemen remained there with the wine and cigars. Then the colonel was in his element, and there the veterans would sit and fight over old and new campaigns, until the discussion became so warm as to look dangerous,

when they would adjourn to the ladies and tea. After the gentlemen had reached the parlor, a few songs would be sung, occasionally a rubber of whist would be played, and the party would break up at an early hour.

It had happened that the colonel had not held one of his little dinners since Jonas had formed his acquaintance. The truth was that the colonel missed Major Mackenzie, who was, so to speak, his right bower, and he had waited for the major's return to New York rather impatiently. As soon as the major reached the city the colonel resolved to give a dinner, so that he could introduce the gentleman, who was to be his son-in-law, to his military friends. Jonas of course, when he was invited, promised to attend; but, as he was chatting with Miss Kitty at the time, he forgot that he would be compelled to appear on that occasion as a military gentleman. Perhaps, however, it was just as well that he did; for what would life be worth, if we were constantly looking forward to the possibilities of the future in the way of misery?

At length the eventful day came around, and the guests duly appeared. Major Mackenzie brought his nephew, Lieutenant Mackenzie, with him. The other guests were four ex-officers of the Union army and their wives. The colonel had intended that Major Mackenzie or his nephew should escort Kitty to dinner; but Jonas and Kitty disturbed his plans, and they went in together. Once at the table, Jonas devoted himself so assiduously to Miss Kitty that the colonel, though he made efforts to do so, was unable to draw Jonas into the discussion of military evolu-

tions, which had commenced among the veterans. Once the colonel did get an answer from him; for, when the colonel asked Jonas if he did not think a certain method was the best one, he answered "Of course." Unfortunately, or fortunately, Kitty had, at that moment, asked Jonas if he would come to the parlor as soon as he could after the ladies left the table, and it is barely possible that the answer applied to her question.

The major and the colonel disagreed on some point, and they became so much interested in it that even the presence of the fairer sex was hardly sufficient to keep them within bounds. They were both vigorous fighters at the table and in the field; and, when either of them had enunciated a proposition, it was hardly possible for them to drop it until the opponent was willing to acknowledge himself vanquished. They were both supported by some of the gentlemen present, and the war of words was waging fiercely. To be sure all this was rather *caviare* to the female guests; but then it was always understood that these little dinners were specially the colonel's, and that military affairs would monopolize the conversation.

Presently the ladies left the room. Jonas held the door open to allow them to pass out, and his eyes followed Kitty longingly, as if he, too, would be willing, for the nonce, to be a lady, merely for the pleasure of being banished from the dining-room. But banishment just then was not to be his fortune; respect for his host and for the other guests compelled him to return to the table.

"And now, gentlemen," said the colonel, after the ladies

had departed, "draw together, and pass the wine more rapidly."

"Yes, colonel," said Major Mackenzie, "and touching that point we were discussing, don't you admit that you were wrong?"

"Not a bit of it," replied the colonel. "And now that the ladies have departed I'll show you in a minute the whole affair."

Jonas sat down, prepared to wait until this interminable discussion should end. Meanwhile, as he was not compelled to say anything, nor even to listen, he fell to wondering what Kitty was doing; whether she was dull and wearied or bright and lively; whether she was wishing for him as much as he was desiring her; and finally he began to wonder what he had ever done, what he had ever been, what he was ever likely to be, to entitle him to take possession of such a glorious creature.

Presently he heard Kitty's clear, sweet voice singing "Clochette," the little song he had taught her; and he rose from his chair, thinking that in the midst of the discussion, which had now become general, he might steal away unobserved, and make his way into the parlor. Unfortunately at that moment Colonel Withers felt the necessity of some assistance, so he exclaimed: —

"Very well, then, we'll leave it to Colonel Smith!"

He turned to Jonas and found that that gentleman was about to leave the table.

"Hold on, colonel," said he; "don't go yet. We haven't commenced to think of breaking up yet."

So Jonas sat down again, and found himself effectually fastened to the chair.

"Well," said the colonel to Major Mackenzie, "will you leave it to Colonel Smith?'

"I don't know about that," said the wary major. "Isn't that too much like leaving it to yourself?"

"No, sir," said Colonel Withers. "Colonel Smith has as yet expressed no opinion. I don't know what he may think about it any more than you do."

"Well, well," said the major, "we'll take his opinion; and, if we don't like it, why, I suppose there's no law compelling us to stand by it."

"Well, colonel," said Colonel Withers to Jonas, "what is your opinion?"

"About what?" inquired Jonas, simply.

"About what?" cried the major. "Why, where have the boy's wits been? Ah, young man, you've missed one of the most beautiful discussions."

"But, major," said Colonel Withers, "if he has not heard any of the discussion, why, he will make so much the better a referee."

"That's true, that's very true," observed the major; "but who is to state the proposition?"

"Well," replied the colonel, "I'll state it; and if you have any amendments to offer you can then present them to him."

"That's agreeable to me, quite agreeable," responded the major.

"Now, colonel," said Colonel Withers to Jonas, "the major maintains —"

"Nay, nay, colonel," interrupted the major; "it's you who maintain. I merely combat the proposition that you have stated."

"Well, it makes no difference."

"Ay, but it does to me, it does to me, colonel," responded the major.

"Then," said the colonel, "I maintain —"

"That's true, colonel," interrupted the major, "and now the boot's on the right leg. You maintain —"

"That," continued the colonel, "cavalry can be used to as much advantage in modern wars as it could in those of former days."

"And I deny the proposition," added the major. "And now, young man, give us your opinion."

Jonas knew as much about cavalry and its uses as a Guinea negro knows about astronomy; but the thought darted through his mind that he was bound to know something about that branch of warfare, and he further thought that, if he hesitated, he was lost, so he replied quite promptly: —

"Well, I must say that I agree with the colonel."

"There," cried Colonel Withers, "I told you so. I knew I must be right."

"And you may be," added the major, "but I doubt it. By the way, colonel," continued he, addressing Jonas, "of what regiment was you colonel?"

That was a poser for Jonas. Several of the gentlemen at the board had been in the Union army, and, if Jonas should

name a regiment at a venture, how could he be certain that some one of those gentlemen had not served in it? Besides, he had never actually given any one a right to call him colonel, he had simply passively allowed the title to be affixed to his name. Furthermore the fact that his title was not legitimate, was sure to come out on some occasion, and it might as well come out first as last. These thoughts passed through his mind like a flash, and he replied to the major: —

"Oh, that is merely a nickname. I'm not a colonel."

"I thought so," said the major, as he leaned back in his chair and looked triumphantly at Colonel Withers.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE COLONEL CONSULTS THE MAJOR.

THE colonel was so astonished at this confession of Jonas that he sprang up from his chair. Everybody thought that that was the signal for leaving the table, and so they all stood up. At first astonishment had struck the colonel dumb, and, fortunately, when speech came to him, he remembered his guests, and so, instead of inquiring into the matter then and there, he simply led the way to the parlor.

As soon as they reached the parlor, Jonas hastened towards the sofa on which Kitty was sitting, but he was stopped on the way by the old colonel, who, in a chilling tone, re-

marked, "I should like to see you after the other folks have gone away."

"Certainly," replied Jonas, wondering why the colonel used such a tone, and also what the colonel could possibly want to see him about. However, he continued his journey towards Miss Kitty.

Meanwhile Colonel Withers made his way to Major Mackenzie.

"Major," said the colonel, "will you come into the sitting-room for a few moments with me?"

"Certainly," replied the major.

"I want to consult you," continued the colonel, "about this matter."

"You mean our friend yonder," said the major, pointing to Jonas.

"Yes," replied the colonel, as he led the way out of the room.

When the two veterans had reached the sitting-room, the colonel opened the conversation.

"Take a cheroot, major. A fellow thinks better when he's smoking, and I'm so knocked up by this thing that I really must smoke to calm my nerves."

So they lit their cigars and fell to smoking.

"Now, major," said the colonel, "tell me frankly what you think about this thing."

"Well," said the major, "it's rather delicate ground."

"But," said the colonel, "I waive that consideration; I consult you as a friend."

"Well," said the major, "it's quite evident that Mr. Smith is not a colonel."

"Quite," muttered Colonel Withers.

"And just as evident that he isn't a military man at all."

"I know it," groaned the colonel. "He has admitted it."

"And he's engaged to your daughter," continued the major, "with your consent."

"Yes," replied the colonel, mournfully.

"Well," said the major, "I don't like to be personal, but if I had a daughter —"

"Well," interrupted the colonel, "if you had a daughter?"

"She should never marry any one who was not a military man."

"No more shall mine," cried the colonel, slapping his hand on the table.

"I thought that was your opinion," said the major.

"I've said it more than an hundred times," responded the colonel, "and I mean to stick to it."

"Then," said the major, "the only question remaining is, how are you to get rid of Mr. Smith?"

"That's it," said the colonel; "and yet I like the fellow."

"But he isn't a military man," remorselessly added the major.

"No," said the colonel.

"He had no right to deceive you," said the major.

"Of course he hadn't."

"And I'd simply tell him — if she were my daughter — that the engagement must be broken."

"But the girl loves him, major."

"Pooh! love's all folderol," said the major, with an expression of great contempt.

"I'm afraid she may suffer."

"Pshaw!" said the major. "No one ever dies from love. How many women did you fall in love with before you married?"

"I don't know," replied the colonel.

"Dozens, without doubt," said the major. "When I was a youngster I was always falling in love, and yet I've survived. No one ever died of love yet, outside of a novel."

"And how would you dismiss him?" asked the colonel.

"Well," said the major, "I should treat him kindly. The fellow is a nice enough person, if he were only a military man, and I don't see any occasion for treating him badly."

"I'm much obliged, major," said the colonel. "I've a rough piece of work ahead."

"Oh," said the major, "you know you can let it stand as it is. All I have suggested has been what I would do, if I had a daughter, and she was in the position that yours is. No daughter of mine should ever marry any one but a military man."

"Nor shall mine," exclaimed the colonel. "I've said it, and I'll stand by it."

"And I think you're right," said the major.

"And now, major," said the colonel, "if you'll leave me for a few moments, I'll join you presently."

The major left the room and the colonel remained behind. The colonel had made up his mind as to what he would do in regard to this matter; but he mortally disliked to do it.

He liked Jonas heartily and thoroughly, and, worse than that, Kitty loved Jonas; but the colonel had made up his mind, years before, that his daughter should marry a military man or remain an old maid, and he could not give up that resolution. As he walked the floor, he groaned as he remembered that he himself had thrown Jonas in Kitty's way, and had encouraged their mutual affection. However, he resolved that he would separate them, cost what it might, and, having so resolved, he went among his guests.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE COLONEL SPEAKS HIS MIND.

MEANWHILE in the parlor conversation had commenced to lag. Thereupon the veterans besieged Miss Kitty, and demanded from her a song. Major Mackenzie came to their assistance.

"You know, Miss Kitty," said the major, "that the Scotch are desperately fond of music, and surely you will oblige an old friend."

"Of course I will, major. What shall it be, 'Annie Laurie'?"

"Nay, nay," replied the major. "I'm not picking out the songs. Sing us anything you please; or we'll leave it to

Colonel Smith here, who unfortunately doesn't agree with me about cavalry."

"But does agree with you," said Jonas, bowing to the major, "in liking to hear Miss Kitty sing."

The major had intended to lead Miss Kitty to the piano, but he was so slow and pompous in his motions, that, before he had made the first movement in that direction, Jonas had started towards the piano with her.

"Well," muttered the major, "he's got cheek enough to be a general, let alone a colonel."

Kitty sang, but, as after she had finished, her auditors demanded a repetition of her efforts, she and Jonas sang a duet, which excited the admiration even of our Scotch major, who congratulated Jonas upon his knowledge of music, insinuating, however, that it would be well for him to increase his information as to the uses of cavalry.

Presently the little party broke up, and the guests departed. The major was the last to leave, except Jonas. The colonel bade the major good-night at the door, and then returned to the parlor, where Jonas and Kitty were seated. As he entered the room the colonel's manner was excessively dignified and imposing, and the expression of his countenance was very severe.

"Colonel Smith," said he, laying a vicious emphasis upon the title, "I should like to see you in the sitting-room."

Kitty sprang up, looked at her father with astonishment, and exclaimed: —

"Why, papa — "

"Never mind, Kitty," interrupted the colonel; "I don't

want you, I want Colonel Smith." Again he placed that terrible emphasis on the title.

Kitty sat down dumfounded.

"I'll be with you in a moment," said Jonas to the colonel, as that gentleman left the room.

"What can papa want?" asked Kitty.

"I can't imagine," replied Jonas.

"But you'll return here?" asked Kitty.

"Of course I will," replied Jonas.

Then he left the room, and went to the sitting-room where the colonel was.

"Sir," said the colonel, after gazing silently at Jonas for a few moments, "you made a remark at my dinner-table to-day, about which I wish to speak to you."

"Oh, about the cavalry," said Jonas.

"No, sir," said the colonel; "about yourself."

"About myself?"

"Yes, sir. You said that you was not a colonel."

"Oh, yes," replied Jonas; "I recollect."

"And is that true?" asked the colonel.

"Certainly," replied Jonas. "It's a nickname which my friends gave me, and to which I have become so accustomed that I answer to it unconsciously."

"Then, sir," said the colonel, "you have deceived me."

"Not intentionally," said Jonas.

"Intentionally or not," replied the colonel, "you have entered my house under false pretences."

Jonas hung his head. His own conscience reproved him considerably; he felt that he should have been more explicit

perhaps, but he was so much accustomed to the title that, in his early acquaintance with Colonel Withers, he had borne it without any design other than that of continuing a pleasant acquaintance during a journey, and since that time he had forgotten all about it.

"You have obtained," continued the colonel, "my consent to your marriage with my daughter by an imposition on me. Know, sir, that I had resolved long ago that she should marry a military gentleman, and I consented to an engagement between you and her because I thought that you was honestly entitled to the title you bear."

"But hear me, colonel! Allow me, I beg of you, to explain," exclaimed Jonas.

"Is your explanation that you really are a colonel?" asked Colonel Withers, in his most solemn tone.

"No, sir, I am not a colonel, but—"

"Then, sir," interrupted the old colonel, "there is no explanation. This engagement with my daughter must be broken off at once."

"Surely, Colonel Withers," exclaimed Jonas, "you do not mean that!"

"But I do mean it," replied the colonel, sternly. "My daughter shall marry a military gentleman, or die an old maid."

"But she loves me, colonel. Have you no thought for her?"

"Then I'll cure her. She still loves her father a little, I presume, and will obey his wishes."

"But for mercy's sake, colonel—"

"No, there are no buts," sternly interrupted the colonel. "I have made up my mind. You may go in and say good-by to Kitty, because I have confidence enough in you not to fear that you will attempt to persuade her to do anything underhanded, and then I must ask you, unpleasant as it is, not to come here any more."

"Colonel Withers," said Jonas, "I —"

"There, my boy," interrupted the colonel, "don't let us quarrel now. I've always liked you, but all you can say will not change my intentions, which have been fixed for years. I should not like to part with you as an enemy, and therefore you had better refrain from making the remark you was about to indulge in. I confess that you have not attempted personally to deceive me, but you should have been more frank; it would have saved us both pain. And now, if you will say good-by to Kitty, — for I'd much rather leave the explanation to you, — I'll be obliged to you."

CHAPTER XXIV.

NOT A COLONEL.

Jonas left the room slowly, and with an expression of sorrow on his face that might have moved the colonel, if he had not been made of the very sternest material. He walked to the parlor, opened the door, and entered.

Meanwhile Kitty had been sitting where Jonas had left her, wondering what this strange interview could mean. It must be remembered that she had not been present at the table when the explosion occurred, so that she had no means of even guessing what her father's strange request for an interview could mean. When Jonas entered the room, slowly, despairingly, she sprang up, threw her arms around his neck, and exclaimed, "Jonas, what is it? And papa! where is he? What does all this mean?"

"I am not a colonel," said Jonas, dejectedly.

"Not a colonel," said she, as if somewhat bewildered by an explanation, which was no explanation to her.

"Yes; I am not a colonel," replied Jonas.

"But, Jonas," said she, "I don't care whether you are or are not a colonel."

His arm unconsciously stole around her waist as he answered: —

"Unfortunately your father does. Oh, that wretched nickname!"

"Then your title is only a nickname?" asked she.

Jonas nodded his head in reply.

"Well, what of that?" said she.

"Would that I had never borne it!" exclaimed he. "Then I might have met you and won you on my own merits."

"Ah, but, Jonas," said she, "don't you know that, without that title, I never could have met you, never could have loved you?"

"And now I have lost you forever."

"Lost!" exclaimed she. "Lost, Jonas! What do you mean?"

"Did I not tell you?" inquired he.

"No, what is there to tell?"

"Your father has just informed me that he has determined that our engagement shall be ended at once."

"Because you are not a colonel?"

"Yes."

"If that is all, don't be frightened about it, Jonas. I didn't love you because you was a colonel. I'll never marry any one but you; and, though I'll never marry without papa's consent, I don't believe he will allow me to become that greatest of abominations to him, an old maid, simply because you are not a colonel."

"And you will really continue to love me?" asked Jonas.

"Till I die," replied Kitty.

He took her in his arms, and almost smothered her with kisses.

"And now," said Kitty, "tell me all about it. I don't understand what it all means, I'm sure."

Thereupon Jonas gave her a detailed history of his unfortunate title, told her how it had become attached to his name; how he had grown so accustomed to it that it really seemed to belong to him; how, for a "lark," he had allowed the mistake of the clerk of the hotel at Boston to impose on Colonel Withers; how he had allowed the deception to go on from a desire of forming her acquaintance; how the explosion had happened at the dinner-table, through the

inquisitiveness of Major Mackenzie, and how Colonel Withers had laid down the law to him in the sitting-room.

"I dislike that nephew of Major Mackenzie's," was Kitty's first remark.

Now isn't that enough to make a man wonder whether women are human beings? What earthly relation Major Mackenzie's nephew had to the present trouble it would have puzzled a Philadelphia lawyer to discover; but Miss Kitty had probably connected the nephew with the uncle, and had recalled remarks made by the major, mere hints, before he retired that evening, and also the fact that the major and the colonel had retired together immediately after dinner. Anyhow the major had injured the creature she loved, and the blow, which she thus struck back, seemed satisfactory to her. To Jonas, however, it was all Greek.

"What," inquired he, "has that to do with it?"

"No matter," answered she. "Then you are not to be allowed to come here any more?"

"So your father has stated," replied Jonas; "but you will write to me, won't you?"

"No, I cannot," replied Kitty; "I will not deceive papa. We must have patience, and wait until papa reconsiders his resolution."

"And you?" asked Jonas.

"Oh, I will do my best to aid the reconsideration, and I will love you forever."

She threw her arm around his neck, and pressed her cheek against his. Just then Colonel Withers entered, but Kitty did not move; she was not in the least ashamed of

her love; why should she be? She had loved Jonas with her father's consent, and was she in a moment to forget what had been growing in her heart for months? There was none of that (so called) young-ladylike instinct in Kitty, which would make her ashamed of the expression of her affections.

"Papa," said she, "have you really determined that Jonas shall not marry me?"

"I hoped Mr. Smith had explained that," said the colonel.

"And you mean to break off our engagement?"

"I consider that it is broken off now. I sent Mr. Smith here to say good-by, and I supposed that he had done that before now," replied the colonel, sternly.

Jonas immediately rose, while a bright flush passed over his face.

"Wait a moment, Jonas," said Kitty, rising and placing her hand on his arm, "don't say anything to papa, and don't go yet."

Jonas stood still, wondering what she was about to say.

"Listen, papa," continued she; "until I met Jonas I never saw any man I cared to love. When I saw him I loved him instinctively; I have loved him ever since. I shall obey you, papa, if you order me not to see him or write to him, but I shall love him all my life. Now, Jonas, kiss me good-by, and then leave me."

Jonas took her in his arms, and kissed her passionately three or four times. Then he bowed to the colonel as he passed him, went out into the hall, and out of the house.

CHAPTER XXV.

DESPAIR.

JONAS drove home, that is to say, his horse took him home; and fortunate it was for him that the horse had travelled over that road so often, for Jonas was quite incapable of driving the beast. The Bloomingdale road was not, at that time, the easiest path in the world for a horse to take care of himself on, for it was full of turns and inequalities of grade; but the horse, that had Jonas in charge on that eventful night, managed to convey Jonas safely to the stable where the horse belonged.

From the stable it was only two blocks to Jonas' home, but he wandered around the streets in a daze; he hardly knew what he was doing, or where he was going. A friendly policeman, who had been watching him for some time, finally came to the conclusion that Jonas was slightly obfuscated with wine, and so he approached our hero.

"Looking for your house?" asked the policeman.

"Yes," replied Jonas, in the absent way in which a person will answer when aroused from a day-dream.

"Number 32, isn't it?" asked the policeman.

"Yes," replied Jonas.

"Here we are," said the policeman. "Good-night."

"Good-night," said Jonas, as he entered the house.

Jonas entered his home, went to his room, and fell into a chair. Poor fellow! his home was a boarding-house. He had no mother to console him, no sisters to condole with him, no brothers to give him their rough, manly sympathy. He was alone in his misery, and alone he must bear it. For hours he sat there, just as he had flung himself into the chair when he entered the room.

Finally, just as the gray light of morning was creeping through the shutters, his brain became clearer, and he could think once more. He rose from his chair, threw off his hat and overcoat, and paced the floor for more than an hour. Then he threw himself on his bed, dressed as he was, and slept heavily till the breakfast-bell rang.

A few hours' rest had done him much good. On the night before, the suddenness of the blow had stunned him; but when he awoke, hope, that ever remains uppermost in the human breast, again came into the foreground.

"What ridiculous nonsense," he thought, "that notion the colonel has got into his head is! — His daughter must marry a military man. Well, I'll marry her, despite his notions."

He half regretted that he had not insisted on the previous evening that he was a colonel, and named a regiment at a venture. He felt very bitter towards the colonel, and thought that that gentleman's acts had been very arbitrary. Mind you, he never blamed himself. Oh, dear, no, we never do that. And yet his troubles had all been brought on

himself by himself. If he had not allowed the colonel to imagine that he was a military man, none of his woes would have happened. To be sure, then he would not have been engaged to Miss Kitty; but, certainly, he had no right to blame the colonel for falling into the trap which he, Jonas Smith, had laid for the old gentleman. And who ought, under the circumstances, to bear the punishment, — the man who had inveigled another into an act, or the man who had been inveigled? Ah, I fear that, so far as right and wrong are concerned, humanity is still very obtuse.

Jonas' bold mood continued for a very short time. He went to his office, and tried to attend to business; but how can a man draw papers or read cases, when there is ever floating before his eyes a lovely face for which he longs, or a stern, forbidding face, which he feels bitterly against? Besides, the jokes of the judge and the questions of his fellow-lawyers grated upon his feelings. He wanted to be away from everybody. Life had become distasteful, sickening to him; the world was merely a blank. He left his office, and wandered on and on through the streets.

"Kitty has promised to remain true to me," muttered he. Then the thought would dart through his mind that perhaps her father would force her to marry some one against her will; and then he would clinch his hands in a manner that, if we did not live in the nineteenth century, would have boded ill for any one who should be rash enough to marry Kitty. Insane notions of every kind darted through his mind. At first, he thought that he would persuade Kitty to leave her father; but he soon dismissed that

notion, for he felt that he could not succeed in doing that. He even went so far as to think seriously of going to Egypt, enlisting in the service of the Khedive, and remaining there until he became a colonel; fortunately, he gave that up. Finally, thoroughly exhausted, he went home and to bed.

So the days went on; he was not fit for work, he was hardly fit to live. He dragged through the weary hours of the day and the wearier hours of the night, hoping all the time that Colonel Withers would relent, and that either the colonel or Kitty would send him some message. Why he hoped or expected that he could not tell, but that expectation kept him alive. At length, goaded on by his misery, he poured out his whole heart on paper, and sent the letter to Kitty. The next day the letter was returned to him unopened, and enclosed in the following epistle: —

"Sir, — I enclose unopened the letter which you sent to my daughter. It hardly seems necessary for me to again inform you that the relations, which once existed between you and my daughter, can never be re-established. My resolution, of which I informed you, that no one but a military gentleman shall marry my daughter, is unchangeable. Under the circumstances can you not see that any correspondence between you and her is useless, and will you not be good enough to overcome your desire to write to her, and thus refrain from causing us all pain?

"Yours respectfully,

"A. B. Withers."

Then Jonas was really in despair. He threw himself into a chair, covered his face with his hands and groaned aloud. Suddenly he sprang up, walked the floor excitedly, and exclaimed vehemently, "This will never do. I must do something. I'll not give her up so."

That was easy enough to say, but what could he do? He thought, and thought, but nothing feasible presented itself to his mind. He went to the window and looked out. The night was a brilliant one, the moon and stars were shining brightly, and, just as he reached the window, the clock in a neighboring church tower struck midnight.

"I have it," cried Jonas. "I'll go and see Charley."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE DOCTOR IS CALLED IN.

MEANWHILE how fared it with Kitty? Not much better it is to be feared than it did with her lover. She had felt quite strong on that eventful evening, when she bade Jonas good-by, for she hoped and expected that, in a few days, her father would give up his notions, and would invite Jonas to return. She knew that her father was very determined, when he had made up his mind; but she also knew that her father loved her dearly. As, however, day after day went by and Jonas failed to appear, she lost her spirits. Her maid told her of the letter which had come, and of her father's action in regard to it; and Kitty began to fear that her father's determination would last. She no longer laughed or sang around the house, much to the old man's dismay; but

he consoled himself with the reflection that she would soon outgrow her love-sickness.

To distract her mind he resolved to invite Major Mackenzie to call, with his nephew. Accordingly, a polite invitation was sent to the major by the colonel; and the major and his nephew complied with the colonel's request. Unfortunately, however, for the colonel's little plan, Kitty declined to see the major and his nephew.

"But why?" asked the colonel.

"I do not like the major," answered Kitty.

"That's sudden," replied the colonel. "Since when have you commenced to dislike him?"

"Since you — that is, since your last dinner. I will see him, papa, if you insist on it, but I do not wish to see him; I don't feel well."

When the major was informed of Miss Kitty's resolution, he was somewhat astonished, but finally remarked: —

"Pooh! my dear colonel, she'll get over it. Let Nature take her in charge. Nature will do. And when she's recovered, why, we'll just take her in hand and marry her to a Mackenzie. That'll console her."

The old colonel had considerable confidence in the major, but, as he watched his daughter, he began to get frightened. She no longer had any desire to go anywhere; she spent most of her time sitting listlessly in her great easy-chair, gazing mournfully at the river. The old colonel finally became so frightened that he resolved to consult a doctor.

Doctor Brown, the colonel's family physician, was a queer compound. He was a little, round man, with a bald head, a

pug nose, a vast mouth, and bright little gray eyes, that twinkled behind his spectacles. He had none of the physician's humbug about him. No fine ladies could persuade him to attend upon them in their humbug sicknesses. His business, as he said, was to cure sick people, — not to make well people believe that they were sick. He had brought Kitty through a severe attack of fever, just after she arrived in New York, and the doctor and Kitty were great friends.

"Kitty," said the colonel, as he entered the room one evening, "Doctor Brown has dropped around with me. Will you see him?"

"But I am not sick, papa."

"No; but then you will see the doctor to oblige me, won't you?"

"Why, of course, papa, if you wish it," replied she, languidly, "though I assure you I am quite well."

The doctor came in.

"Ah, Miss Kitty, we are not ill, are we?" asked he.

"Oh dear, no;" replied she, "but papa thinks I am."

"Well," said the doctor, "let me feel your pulse — and see your tongue — and now, wait a moment while I listen at your back. Draw a long breath, Miss Kitty."

The doctor looked quite grave, after he had gone through those usual professional performances. He endeavored to find some bodily ailment, which would account for her languor and depression. Fortunately this doctor was a man of common sense, and, when he failed to find anything wrong about the body, began to suspect that there was something out of the way either in the mind or the affec-

tions. He watched her carefully for a few moments, while he pretended to be deeply engaged in chatting with her father.

"Miss Kitty," said he, finally, "won't you let me banish you for a few moments?"

"Of course, doctor, I'll run away at once."

"Well, doctor?" inquired the colonel, as soon as she had left the room.

"Yes," said the doctor, reflectively, as if he had hit upon the solution of some problem upon which he had been cogitating.

"What is the matter with her, doctor?" inquired the colonel, quite eagerly.

"Physically nothing," replied the doctor; "she's as sound as a dollar, *now*."

"What do you mean by now?" inquired the colonel.

"I mean that she is suffering from some mental affliction, which will not leave her sound long."

"You don't tell me so, doctor?" said the colonel, eagerly.

"Yes, I do," promptly responded the doctor. "Now what is it?"

"How should I know?" asked the colonel, in a surly tone.

"Ah, I see," said the doctor, in a tone of great confidence. "She's in love."

"Well, what then?" asked the colonel, brusquely.

"Doesn't the young gentleman love her?"

"I suppose so. He says he does."

"Ah, I see, you oppose him."

"Well, why the devil isn't he a military man, then?" ejaculated the colonel.

"Ah," said the doctor, "that's where the shoe pinches?"

"Yes," said the colonel, "I want my daughter to marry a military man, if she marries any one."

"I didn't think you was so foolish," said the doctor. "And so the young man isn't an officer?"

"Not even a private," ejaculated the colonel.

"My dear colonel," said Doctor Brown, "whether he be a military man or not, if you want to save your daughter, you'd better let him marry her. The affections are her strong point."

"I know that," said the colonel, mournfully.

"I thought it was odd, if you had lived with her all these years and not discovered that," suggested the doctor. "She is peculiarly sensitive, and yet she is peculiarly self-reliant. She will die without making any complaint."

"Great heavens, doctor!" cried the colonel, "do you mean to say that there is any chance of Kitty's dying?"

"That is precisely what I do mean to say," replied the doctor, solemnly.

"Die! Kitty die!" cried the old colonel. "But it is not yet too late, is it, doctor?"

"Oh, by no means. She is still curable, but you are the only man who can cure her."

Thereupon the doctor took his hat and gloves, and departed. Probably he had drawn a rather long bow; but then he had not the slightest respect for the old colonel's predilections in favor of military men, and he had a strong

fondness for Miss Kitty, and heartily disliked to see her sacrificed to her father's foolish notions. After the departure of the doctor, the old colonel stood still for a few moments. His face was quite drawn, and there were tears in his eyes. Probably visions of Kitty in her babyhood, her childhood, her girlhood, and her maidenhood, flitted before his eyes. Thoughts of what a kind and loving daughter she had been went through his mind, and dimmed his eyes. He looked at his watch, rushed into the hall, put on his overcoat, had his horse harnessed, jumped into the wagon, and drove down the road as if life depended on his speed.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A RENT IN THE CLOUD.

Perhaps it would be proper to follow Jonas on the little journey on which he started as the clock was striking midnight. It was at least half-past that witching hour when he rang the bell affixed to Charley Hastrom's front door. Of course everybody was in bed and fast asleep, and so Jonas was compelled to ring the bell a second time. Then Charley stuck his head out of a window in the second story, and, in deep, sepulchral tones, designed to frighten the intruder if he should happen to be a burglar, exclaimed: —

"Who's there?"

"I," replied Jonas.

"That's refreshing, Becky, isn't it?" said Charley to his wife, who was standing behind him. Then he again addressed the intruder.

"Well," said he, "if it isn't impertinent, who the mischief is I?"

"Jonas Smith," replied the visitor.

"But, Jonas, my dear fellow, don't you see that it's after midnight?"

"No matter, I must see you, Charley."

"Next week won't do, then?" urged Charley.

"No; I must see you to-night."

"Then I'll come down."

Presently Charley appeared at the front door, admitted Jonas, and led him into the parlor. Then he lit the gas, and, for the first time, noticed Jonas' worn and wretched appearance.

"For mercy's sake," cried Charley, now thoroughly interested, "what ails you, Jonas? You haven't been on a '*tear*,' have you?"

"No," replied Jonas.

"What is it, then?" asked Charley.

"Where's your wife?" inquired Jonas, abruptly.

"Come, my dear fellow," said Charley, "that's too much. It's bad enough for you to rouse me out of bed at this hour of the night; but to ask my wife to get up also is carrying the thing rather too far."

"Please ask her to come down, Charley," said Jonas, as he dropped into a chair.

"Oh, if you put it in that way," said Charley, "of course I must obey."

So he went to the foot of the stairs and called Becky.

Fortunately Mrs. Becky had suspected that she would be needed, and had been industriously dressing herself, so that, when she was called, she was ready to descend. When they had all assembled, Charley spoke: —

"Now, then, Jonas, I hope what you are going to tell us is important. Out with it."

"I am not a colonel," said Jonas, dolefully.

"Well, if I hadn't known that for years," said Charley, "perhaps I might have been obliged to you for waking me up at midnight to inform me of it, but as it is — "

"Not a colonel!" ejaculated Mrs. Becky.

"Not a colonel," echoed Jonas.

"But surely — Charley, didn't you tell us about a desperate charge, etc.?" asked Mrs. Becky.

"Ahem!" said Charley, "I'll explain that hereafter, my dear. That was merely a page of history which hasn't got into the books yet. And now, Jonas, go on, for I suppose there's more of the story."

So Jonas told his story as briefly as he could, and then narrated how he had striven to find some way out of his difficulties; and finally how, in his despair, he had thought of them, and had come around at once to see if they could help him.

"And you did just right," said Mrs. Becky, promptly. "Of course we can help you. What is the use of friends if they don't help one another?"

"Well, I confess," said Charley, slowly, "she is Colonel Withers' daughter, and, if Colonel Withers has put his foot down, I don't exactly see — "

"Pooh, bother!" interrupted Mrs. Becky. "Of course you don't see; men never do. I see, however, and that is quite sufficient."

"Well, my dear," said Charley, "suppose you tell a couple of purblind individuals exactly what you do see."

"The first thing to be done," replied she, quickly, "is to furnish temporary relief."

"That's not to be gainsaid," responded Charley.

"I take that upon myself," said Mrs. Becky.

"Thanks, Mrs. Hastrom," said Jonas.

"But how, my dear?" asked Charley.

"Now, then," said Mrs. Becky to Jonas, "you want her to know that you are still true to her, and that you always will be; and also want to find out how she feels, and looks, and acts, don't you?"

"I knew you would help me," said Jonas, brightening up.

"Of course," replied Mrs. Becky. "Well, to-morrow, I'll go up to Colonel Withers' and spy out the land. Do you come here to dinner, to-morrow, and I'll make my report. In the mean time Charley and I will try to think out some means of permanent relief."

Jonas thanked her heartily for her kindness, and promised to call again on the following evening. Charley offered him a bed in his house; but Jonas insisted upon going to his own home.

"My dear Becky," said Charley, when he had returned from the front door, "what a woman you are!"

"Pooh!" said Mrs. Becky, "we are all alike when our friends are in sorrow."

"But, my dear," said Charley, "do you suppose it's the correct thing for us to interfere with Colonel Withers' family arrangements?"

"Correct!" exclaimed she. "That's always the way with men. What do we care whether it is correct or not? Are we to stand by and see Jonas and Kitty made miserable, merely because an old gentleman happens to have foolish notions?"

"That's just what I'm not sure about," replied Charley.

"Of course we are not," said Mrs. Becky, "and now let's go to bed."

On the morrow, according to her promise, Mrs. Becky called upon Kitty. Fortunately the colonel was not at home, and so Mrs. Becky had a clear field.

"I'm so glad to see you," exclaimed Kitty as Mrs. Becky entered the room.

"I expected you would be," said Mrs. Becky, "and now ask the questions you are dying to ask."

"Then you have seen Jonas?" asked Kitty.

"Certainly."

"When?"

"Last night."

"And he is—?"

"Horribly miserable."

"Ah!" sighed Kitty. "Poor Jonas!"

"But you, yourself, Kitty," urged Mrs. Becky, "look badly."

"I am not very well," replied Kitty.

"Now, Kitty," said Mrs. Becky, "when men are miserable they are horribly miserable; but a girl ought to bear suffering better. Besides, what have you to be wretched about? Jonas loves you, and will always love you."

"Do you really think so?" asked Kitty, eagerly.

"My dear Kitty," said Mrs. Becky, "you ought to have more pride. A girl like you can't be forgotten by a man."

"But I am away from him."

"Don't let that trouble you. I'll venture to say that there's a very good photograph of you on his heart. Of course we'll find some way out of this trouble."

"Will you?" cried Kitty. "Are you sure, quite sure?"

"Never was surer of anything in my life. In the mean while I'll let Jonas know how you feel, and now let me see you brighten up a little."

Kitty did brighten up under the influence of Mrs. Hastrom's cheering promises; so that, when that lady was ready to depart, Kitty looked quite like her old self.

"Now, Kitty," said Mrs. Becky, as she was leaving, "be as cheerful as you can in reality, but don't show any of it before your father."

"Why not?" asked Kitty.

"Because the fact that you are miserable is infinitely more likely to make your father restore Jonas to you than anything I or anybody else can do."

"Shall I deceive papa?"

"Pooh!" said Mrs. Becky, "your father will tell you that all things are fair in war, and I tell you that all things are fair in love."

However, Kitty was not compelled to deceive her father; for, after Mrs. Becky had gone, the reaction set in, and Kitty was quite as miserable as she had been before.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CHARLEY TO THE RESCUE.

On the following day Jonas called at the house of the Hastroms at a much more reasonable hour than the one he had selected for his last visit; in fact, he reached the house just as Charley and Mrs. Becky were sitting down to dinner. Jonas took his place at the table, but he was so impatient for information that he could not even await the departure of the servant.

"Did you see her?" asked he eagerly of Mrs. Hastrom.

"Yes," replied that little woman. "I went there this morning, and stayed a couple of hours with her."

"And how does she look?" asked Jonas.

"Not very well," replied Mrs. Becky.

"Sick?" asked Jonas, eagerly.

"No," replied Mrs. Becky, "only love-sick."

Then Mrs. Becky told him all that she could remember

of her visit, told him how eagerly Kitty had listened to the promises he had sent, and how she had requested Mrs. Becky to inform Jonas that she would never, never marry any one else.

For a time Jonas brightened up, but listening to Mrs. Becky was not harkening to Kitty's voice, and, when Mrs. Becky had emptied her budget and had devoted herself to her dinner, his face darkened again, and he became wretched once more. Now nothing can be more doleful than a man given over to despair. Probably that is so because such conduct is contrary to all our notions of what a man should be and do. It must be remembered, however, that men are differently constituted. Some look upon a heart wound as a mere bagatelle, while others suffer from such an affliction during their whole lives. Many men are quite as sensitive as women, and, though they may not show their misery to mankind, do still unbosom themselves to their intimate friends.

Jonas was of a peculiarly romantic disposition, and the unique manner in which he had formed Kitty Withers' acquaintance, and the rare beauty and faultless temper of the girl had made him very shortly her devoted slave. Remember, too, the cup was dashed from his very lips; he was engaged to her with her father's consent, and looked forward to marriage with her as a certainty. Man is a very peculiar creature. If death had stepped in and removed Kitty, probably Jonas would have mourned her deeply, and in time remembered her as a beautiful dream; but, while she

was living and apparently within his reach, he desired to call her his own, with a desire too strong to be described.

"Jonas," said Charley, "be a man."

"That's what I am," said Jonas; "not a stone."

"Yes; but, my dear fellow," said Charley, "I never saw you give way so before."

"Because I never had occasion," replied Jonas, bitterly. "My life's to be wrecked, and the girl I love is to be given to another perhaps, because an old man has silly notions."

"Now look here, Jonas," said Charley, "she's his daughter, and he has a right to say something about her marriage. Besides, you are somewhat to blame for not being more frank with him; you knew his notions and yet you allowed him to think that you was a colonel."

"Hang that name!" exclaimed Jonas.

"Well, I've no objection to that," responded Charley. "However, as I am somewhat to blame in this matter—"

"You!" interrupted Jonas.

"Yes," replied Charley; "when we were at the mountains, I told Colonel Withers a cock-and-bull story about an heroic act you did during the war."

"You told him that?" asked Jonas.

"Yes," replied Charley. "I made you a double-distilled, first-class hero."

"No wonder he despised me then," said Jonas, absently.

"Not a bit of wonder about it," said Charley, "for when I do draw the bow, I draw it strong; don't I, Becky?"

"That you do," promptly replied Mrs. Becky.

"And, therefore," continued Charley, "I feel bound,

under the circumstances, to give you the very best advice I can offer. Now listen intently. There are three ways out of this hobble."

"What are they?" asked Jonas.

"First," said Charley, "you can cut the whole thing, — wash your hands of it."

Jonas shook his head.

"Don't talk like a simpleton, Charley," said Mrs. Becky.

"Second," said Charley, as if he had not heard his wife's interruption, "you can take the girl and run away with her, — elope, they call it in the books."

"She'd never do that," said Jonas, dejectedly.

"I don't believe she would," said Charley; "and, therefore, I don't consider that plan a very brilliant one."

"I hope the third is an improvement on it," observed Mrs. Becky.

"Third," continued Charley, winking solemnly at his wife, "I'd advise you to keep up your courage, and wait patiently for future events, which I feel sure will be favorable to you."

"That's sensible," said Mrs. Becky, "for I really believe that the colonel will come around finally."

"No," said Jonas, shaking his head, "you don't know him. If I were only really a colonel!"

"By Jove!" cried Charley, springing up and upsetting his plate, "I have it!"

"What?" cried Mrs. Becky.

Jonas looked up.

"Ahem!" said Charley; "I was thinking of something else."

Jonas buried himself in his thoughts again, and then Charley whispered to his wife.

"The permanent relief," were the words which he dropped slowly in her ear.

"Well, my dear," said Mrs. Becky, "if you couldn't obtain that without upsetting your plate, I'll forgive you; but if you could —"

"But I couldn't, Becky, I really couldn't," interrupted Charley.

"Very well, then," said Mrs. Becky, "what is your permanent relief?"

"It's an idea," replied Charley.

"Remarkable!" said Mrs. Becky. "I suppose we are not capable of comprehending it."

"Oh, yes," replied Charley, "but it requires secrecy."

"Well, am I not as secret as the grave?" inquired Mrs. Becky.

"You are wonderful for a woman, my dear," responded Charley; "but you are a woman."

"Can't you give us at least a hint?" asked she.

Charley looked at Jonas, and, finding that that gentleman was day-dreaming, placed his finger on the side of his nose, winked his eye, and whispered: —

"The Nine Hundred and First."

"The Nine Hundred and First?" echoed Mrs. Becky, with a puzzled expression.

"Read that," said Charley, handing her a letter which he took from his pocket.

She read it, and then exclaimed eagerly: —

"And you mean — "

"Precisely," interrupted Charley. "The Nine Hundred and First ! "

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE GALLANT NINE HUNDRED AND FIRST.

"THE Nine Hundred and First," was what Charley had said when called upon by his wife to explain his idea of the permanent relief needed by Jonas.

Mrs. Becky had caught the idea which was floating in the mind of her husband, and, like a good and dutiful wife (Heaven send more of them !), had approved her husband's plan, and she, too, had muttered : —

"The Nine Hundred and First ! "

Now everybody must admit that if the Nine Hundred and First is to be the *deus ex machina* of this story, that regiment should be properly introduced to the reader. Oh, I know that it is a terrible thing to bring into this story, at its present stage, so vast a body of men, especially when there are so few ladies on hand. I am well aware that, in every properly constructed chronicle of real life there should be at least one lady for every gentleman, that every Jack should have a Jill, and I am the last person in the world to kick against any well-established rule of society ; but what

can a veracious story-teller, like your humble servant, do? The regiment is part of the story, and must be introduced, —that is beyond all question. I am perfectly willing to be good-natured about the matter, but the Nine Hundred and First is in the story, and duty compels me to present it to you. I am willing to compromise the matter, however, and I'll introduce the regiment as a regiment, and thus avoid the threatened plethora of masculines.

The gallant Nine Hundred and First was one of New York city's militia regiments. Many a time had it bravely marched down Broadway; thousands of times, in its armory, when drilling, had it boldly advanced at double-quick right up to the wall of the armory building without flinching, and dozens of times had it endured the privations of the tented field at Newport, or Saratoga, or Long Branch. It was composed of the hardy sons of luxury, and, out of its armory, its members were the gilded youth of this metropolis of the western continent.

It was grand in its campaigns, and its parades, and its drillings, but it was superlative in its balls and receptions. How its members could glide through the "mazes of the giddy," and how the fair damsels of Gotham did love to have the arms of members of the Nine Hundred and First steal round their waist, and whirl them in the dreamy waltz! Ah, I can assure you the Nine Hundred and First was not to be sneezed at. If you think I am mistaken, ask some fair maiden, who has worried herself almost into a fever in her efforts to obtain tickets for the regiment's annual ball, about it, and find out what she thinks of the regiment.

There are regiments and regiments. Some are controlled by one-man power, some are ruled by cliques or juntas, while others are as democratic as you could wish, and have meetings which are as lively as a town gathering in some rustic village. The Nine Hundred and First was one of the latter kind. You see there was a perfect social equality among the members. Many of the privates occupied positions in private life quite as elevated as those occupied by their commanders. The officers and men were on the best of terms, and got along together admirably; but, when any important question came up they all had opinions, and desired to express them.

Charley Hastrom had long been a member of the Nine Hundred and First; at the time of which we are writing he was captain of one of the companies. He had been a member before his marriage, and still remained one. Mrs. Becky had proved herself a very sensible little woman, for one of their first conversations after their marriage was as follows: —

"Becky," said Charley, "I suppose you will want me to resign from the regiment."

"Have I said so, Charley?" asked she.

"No," replied he; "but then I am ready to resign, if you really wish it."

"Wait till I ask it, Charley," added she.

"Thanks, Becky," said Charley, joyfully. "I am fond of the old regiment, and should dislike ever so much to leave it."

"You don't really think, Charley," said she, "that I wish to deprive you of any of your pleasures, do you?"

"I don't know," responded he.

"Pshaw!" said she, "that isn't what marriage means to me. I'm not a bit afraid of your regiment making you forget me."

"Nor need you be," responded Charley, as he kissed her.

Remember that performance occurred during the honeymoon!

It's a pity, however, that all wives cannot remember that a man is not able to throw aside all his former ties, without a great exertion, and cannot be willing to allow husbands to enjoy those pleasures which in no wise interfere with domestic happiness. Unfortunately, however, women are human; and, therefore, can hardly have such an abiding faith in mankind as will control their minds, when — the millennium comes.

The letter, which, as we have heretofore detailed, Charley had shown to his wife, was simply a notification that, at a meeting to be held at the armory on the following Thursday evening, the regiment would proceed to elect a colonel. That letter had put into Charley's head a brilliant idea, of which Mrs. Becky had expressed her approval, and which bade fair, if it succeeded, to cut the tangled web of circumstances which had gathered around Jonas and Kitty. To be sure, the success of the affair looked rather dubious, but that did not deter Charley, and, though perhaps there are other characters in our story to whom some attention should be paid at this moment, the reader must pardon us if we cannot refrain from following out Charley's plans.

CHAPTER XXX.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE ELECTION.

At the period of which we are writing, the Nine Hundred and First was in a state of effervescence. A short time before, their colonel had died, and the day on which the election of his successor was to take place was rapily approaching. Unfortunately there was a terrible division in the opinions of the members as to who that successor should be. One party had been in favor of electing the lieutenant-colonel to the vacant position, while another party believed that, by choosing some prominent outside man, they would add *éclat* to the regiment. The lieutenant-colonel, however, promptly refused to run; he was unwilling, and, as he said, unable to bear the expense which the position of colonel generally threw upon the incumbent. Then the insiders, as they called themselves, at once split up into factions. Some favored the major, while others desired to vote for the captains of their respective companies.

Of course the discord which existed among the insiders would have given the outsiders a clear field, if it had not been for the fact that the several cliques, who believed in electing one of their own members, had resolved, that rather than see an outsider elected they would all unite

upon one of their candidates, and for the further fact that as much unanimity, as was possible, did not exist among the outsiders.

Take it all in all it was a very pretty mess. Private Jones explained it to Private Brown very thoroughly.

"You see, Brown," said Jones, "none of those fellows know exactly what they want."

"That's so," admitted Brown.

"The truth is," continued Jones, "it don't make any difference who the colonel is. The real question is, who are the men?"

"I believe you," interrupted Brown.

"As far as I can see," continued Jones, "they might as well elect me as anybody else."

"Yes, or me," suggested Brown.

"Well, that isn't so clear," continued Jones; "but anyhow there'll be a precious row at this election, and I'm bound to be on hand to see the sport."

The officers, however, did not agree entirely with Private Jones, and the electioneering was something huge. Johnny Grimshaw, who had never been known before to waste a penny on anybody but his precious self, opened bottles of wine enough to have stocked a small cellar. He was an outsider, and was in favor of electing a prominent politician, who was willing to use his position for the advantage of the regiment. Charley Hastrom labored assiduously, as was his wont when he took anything in hand. He was an insider, and, though he was named as a candidate by his friends, he disclaimed all desire for the position, and

labored for the election of the major, who, he thought, under the circumstances, was really entitled to the place. However, Charley did not at all look upon the battle as a certain victory for his side.

Suddenly, and this happened immediately after the idea heretofore referred to struck him, Charley ceased to work for the major.

"Charley," said Johnny Grimshaw, "have you given up the job?"

"Oh, no," said Charley.

"Oh, I thought you had, as I hadn't heard of your doing any work for a day or so."

"Pooh!" said Charley, "what's the use of working, when you've got a sure thing?"

"Sure thing!" cried Grimshaw. "Don't you believe it. Look here, Charley, our man has promised four positions under the city government, if we win, and you bet they'll carry the day."

"All right," responded Charley; "but I don't believe it."

Although Charley had ceased to work for the major, he was not idle. His chief business however, seemed to be to introduce Jonas to those of the officers with whom that gentleman was not acquainted. Fortunately, Jonas did know most of the officers of the Nine Hundred and First, and was on very good terms with them. However, Charley thought there was no harm in making Jonas still more intimate with them, especially as he now desired to carry out his idea.

"Jonas," Charley had said, in developing his plan to that

gentleman, "the gods help those who help themselves. You've been playing milksop long enough, and now I want you to be something like your own self."

"I'll try," Jonas had replied; "what do you want me to do?"

"I want you to be hale-fellow-well-met with everybody in the regiment."

"Very well," said Jonas.

"You can do your sighing and moaning at night, when nobody can see you; but that kind of business don't suit our bold soldier boys."

So Charley went on introducing Jonas, and Jonas manfully endeavored to perform his part of the bargain, and succeeded admirably, when the circumstances were considered. He quite kept up his spirits when he was with the officers of the regiment. To be sure, it was rather hard on Charley and Mrs. Becky, for he gave them the benefit of most of his low spirits; but, as they were real friends, they endured that, hoping that he and they would soon be relieved.

Still the campaign within the regiment went on, and so vigorously was it conducted that, if it had lasted much longer than it did, the probabilities are that the regiment would have broken into pieces, and, as there is no provision in the militia system of this State for asteroids, the regiment would have been disbanded.

As the day of the election approached the excitement increased. Each member fought, talked, drank, and shouted valiantly for his candidate. Every officer was pledged for

some one, and the appearances of things indicated a long fight. The general opinion was that the forces were nearly evenly divided between the outsiders and insiders; neither party being solid for any one man.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE ELECTION.

At length the important day, the day of the election, was at hand. The officers all assembled in solemn conclave at the armory. Solemn, I said, and that word exactly characterized their appearances. Jokes were at a discount, story-tellers could not find listeners, and a laugh was frightened at its own echo. It is curious, but true, that, if your friend adopts an opinion different from yours, especially in a social assembly, he cannot separate himself from his opinion sufficiently to meet you on the old friendly footing, until, what we in this country have learned to look upon as the final arbiter between opinions, the ballot-box has settled the question; then your friend forgets all your differences, and you and he are one again. So it was on this occasion; everybody was as dignified and solemn as if he were preparing himself for the position of chief mourner at some first-class funeral.

As soon as the appointed hour had arrived, the meeting

was called to order. Everybody glanced around the room, hoping that he would find that some of the opposite side had been kept away; but everybody was disappointed, for all the officers were there.

After the preliminaries had been arranged, they commenced balloting. The first ballot was taken amid the most intense excitement; then the ballots were slowly and carefully counted, and the presiding officer gravely announced that there was no election. That announcement was received with one universal sigh of relief; it was evident that everybody had remained true to his pledge. A second ballot was taken; but, by this time, the intense excitement had somewhat subsided. Again came the announcement that there was no election; and again there was a sigh of relief. A third, a fourth, and a fifth vote brought precisely the same result; the figures for each candidate remained invariably the same; and the votes were so thoroughly distributed, that no one candidate had sufficient to entitle him to the vacant position. The electioneering had been very thoroughly and skilfully done, and there was unquestionably, for this evening at least, a dead-lock.

When the result of the fifth vote had been announced, there was a short halt, a sort of intermission, in the proceedings. Everybody wanted to wonder how long this thing would continue; and such an immense subject of reflection as that required time to be properly thought out. Suddenly Charley Hastrom marched from his seat to the front of the room, and stood facing the officers. Everybody wondered what idea had struck Charley, and expected that

he would suggest something which would arrange this troublesome affair.

Silence fell on the room at that moment. Everybody was attentive; and, as soon as the eyes of all present had become fixed on him, Charley spoke.

"Gentlemen," said he, "it is quite apparent that there is a dead-lock here. We have taken five ballots, and they have all resulted exactly alike; and it is quite evident that if we should take ten votes or an hundred votes to-night the result would be invariably the same. It is further evident that, as we cannot arrive at any conclusion during the present evening, this matter must be adjourned to another meeting, in order to give the members time to think and talk the affair over among themselves. Now, I've been with you for a long time, and I believe you are all on friendly terms with me —"

"Three cheers for Charley," cried Lieutenant Jackson.

They were given with a will; for the gentlemen present had been quiet so long that they were ready to cheer at or for anything or anybody.

"Thanks, gentlemen," said Charley. "And now I want to ask a particular favor of you, a very particular favor. I have a friend, — you all know him, — Jonas Smith. Most of you know that he has for a long time been nicknamed colonel. I propose briefly to tell you his story. Under the name of Colonel Smith he was introduced to an English colonel, who has a charming daughter, — I vouch for the charming, for I have seen her myself. Naturally enough Jonas fell in love with the daughter, and the old gentleman,

supposing that Jonas was an ex-colonel, consented to their engagement. Unfortunately, however, the old gentleman found out that Jonas had never been a colonel, and, thereupon, immediately invited my friend to occupy the outside of the house. My friend is in despair, for the old colonel is inflexible. If Jonas were entitled to wear the title of colonel, he could still marry his charmer and be happy. Now, as I said before, there can be no election to-night. Why won't you, as a particular favor to me, and as a means of helping a poor devil out of a tight place, elect my friend, Jonas Smith, as colonel of the regiment to-night? He'll make one parade, and resign at the next meeting. Besides, it will be a victory for neither side, for he has been with us so much that he is almost one of us, and yet is not quite a member. I wouldn't ask such an irregular thing under any other circumstances, but I do hope that you'll do me this favor."

"By Jove!" said Lieutenant Jackson, as soon as Charley had finished, "it would be a shame to spoil such a love-match as that."

"Well," said the lieutenant-colonel, quite promptly, "I, for one, am in favor of it."

The leader of the outsiders consulted with some of his most important assistants, and then, turning to Charley, inquired: —

"I say, Charley, if we do this who'll guarantee the resignation?"

"I will," replied Charley.

"And I, too," added the lieutenant-colonel, who happened to be a particular friend of Jonas.

"But," said Charley, "there is no necessity of any guaranty. Jonas is in the next room, and he'll sign the resignation at once."

"Bring him in," said the leader of the outsiders.

So Jonas was brought in from one of the company rooms, where he had been placed by Charley, so that they might be prepared for every emergency.

"Gentlemen," said Jonas, "my friend, Charley Hastrom, has said all I can say with regard to my desires much better than I could have said it. I know that I, a stranger, am asking a very great favor from you, but, believe me, I shall remember your kindness to the day of my death."

"All right, Jonas," said the leader of the outsiders, "we'll give you a helping hand."

"And now, gentlemen, to the ballot," said the lieutenant-colonel, who was one of the leaders of the insiders.

Thereupon they proceeded once more to vote. When the ballots had been counted, it was found that Jonas had been elected unanimously.

"Three cheers for Colonel Smith!" cried Charley.

After they had been given and had been supplemented with a tiger, Jonas stepped forward.

"Gentlemen," said he, "you have done me a favor, which I never shall forget. I thank you heartily for your kindness. I am only sorry that I am not fit to be your colonel, in earnest. However, you have given me the title, and now,

if the secretary will draw up a resignation, to take effect at the next meeting, I'll sign it at once."

"Bother the resignation!" said the leader of the outsiders. "We'll take your word that you'll hand that in when we want it. Meanwhile you'll be our colonel until we succeed in agreeing, a little better than we have to-night, on the person we want as your successor."

"Be careful, Jonas," said the lieutenant-colonel, "that you don't bring down ruin on the regiment."

"If I do," said Jonas, "depose me at once."

"Well, gentlemen," said the leader of the outsiders, "is that arrangement satisfactory to all of you?"

"Hurrah for Colonel Smith!" shouted some one.

And hurrah for Colonel Smith was the answer to the question.

"I guess it's satisfactory," said the lieutenant-colonel, laughing.

"And now, gentlemen," said the new colonel, "if you'll come around to Delmonico's with me, we'll toast the Nine Hundred and First."

Delmonico's had seldom seen a jollier crowd than it did that night, and the jolliest of the party was the late despairing Jonas Smith.

CHAPTER XXXII.

COLONEL WITHERS ON THE WAR-PATH.

Some chapters back we left Colonel Withers in his wagon, driving down the road as if life depended on his speed. I admit that I have not treated that veteran warrior with the respect due to his years, in thus leaving him, apparently on an endless drive, for so long a period of time; but what can an author do? It happens in books, as it does in life, that one is compelled to go on with the work in hand, and afterwards go back and pick up the loose threads. Besides, you must admit that introducing the Nine Hundred and First into this little work was quite a serious undertaking, and it behooved the author, after he had once taken it in hand, to finish it up properly. But let us return to our colonel we have neglected.

When Colonel Withers left his house, as we have described in a former chapter, he urged his horse along at a high rate of speed for a mile or two. He had resolved to do something, and, like all ardent natures, he was anxious to finish it as speedily as possible. The doctor's words had frightened him terribly, and he had rushed off without considering thoroughly the work he had in hand. After he

had cooled off a little, however, he began to reflect that he was about to make himself ridiculous.

"What," he thought, "after saying again and again, that, under no circumstances, would I allow my daughter to marry a civilian, am I about to throw her at one?"

The horse was allowed to drop to a much more moderate gait than the one at which he had been started.

"Can I," he thought, "an old soldier, humiliate myself to this young man, and beg him on my knees to marry my daughter?"

That had seemed easy enough when the words of the doctor were ringing in his ears, but now it appeared terrible.

The horse had meanwhile dropped to a walk.

The more he thought of it the more humiliating it seemed, and the more impossible for him to perform the act.

"What the deuce will the major say?" ejaculated the poor colonel.

That was the straw that broke the camel's back. He drew up the reins, turned the horse's head around, and started for his home. He had gone but a short distance, however, when the doctor's words began to ring in his ears once more, and visions of his daughter in her misery began to float before his eyes. Those were too much for him.

"Confound the major!" muttered he.

Then he shut his teeth tight together, turned the horse's head once more, and drove without a stop to the house where Jonas resided.

Now, it must be admitted, that, for a proud man, Colonel Withers had a very unpleasant job on hand. He had driven

Jonas from his house, had informed that young gentleman that under no circumstances could he ever marry Kitty; and now, he was compelled to go to Jonas, and beg him to marry Miss Kitty. Remember, too, that he did not know the state of Jonas's mind. He, of course, did not dream that Jonas was in despair at the loss of the girl he loved. The horrible thought, "Suppose Jonas, driven from my house, has met with some other young damsel, who has taken the place of Kitty in his affection," darted through his mind. Then, contrary to the rules of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the colonel expressed his fear by whipping his horse, just for all the world as if the few minutes' time that he would thus make, would prevent Jonas from entangling himself with some young woman other than Kitty.

Finally, quite late in the evening, the colonel reached the boarding-house at which Jonas resided. He strode up the steps, and pulled the bell viciously. Luckily, the landlady herself had not yet retired; probably, with the aid of the complete cook-book, she was compounding some of those mysterious dishes which so astonish the casual visitor at a boarding-house. She opened the door, and looked at the colonel in astonishment.

"Madame," shouted he, "does Mr. Jonas Smith reside in this house?"

"Yes," blandly replied the landlady.

"Then I want to see him at once."

"I'm sorry to say that he is not at home."

"Not at home!" echoed the colonel, quite taken aback. That possibility had not entered into his calculations.

"Where is he, then?" cried the colonel, when he had recovèred from his astonishment.

"I don't know," replied the landlady; "but you can come in and wait for him."

"Wait!" shouted the colonel. "Do I look as if I could wait for him or anybody?"

"You can call to-morrow, if you prefer," responded she.

"To-morrow be hanged!" exclaimed he. "Madame, I'll come in and wait."

So she showed him into the parlor, and left him there to await Jonas' return.

Here was a pretty mess for the colonel. He had worked himself up to the point where he was willing to humiliate himself, but he had not in the least counted upon any difficulty, such as not being able to find Jonas at home. Besides, his resolution was waning; he felt that if he did not do the work on that night, and before the heat of his excitement had passed away, he would never do it. He walked up and down the floor unceasingly, just for all the world as if chairs had never been invented. Then he made trips to the front door, in order to see whether, by peering up and down the street, he could discern Jonas approaching. The poor landlady was too frightened to go to bed; she feared that she had admitted a madman, and only the recollection that she had three male boarders in the house prevented her from shouting lustily for the police. At length the colonel went to the head of the basement stairs

and called the landlady; she approached him with fear and trembling.

"Madame," said he, "don't you know when Mr. Smith will return?"

"No, sir," responded she.

"Nor where he has gone?"

"No, sir."

"Where does he usually go?"

"Perhaps he's at Mr. Hastrom's," suggested she.

"Where's that?" asked the colonel, quickly.

She gave him the address, and locked the door after him with great pleasure. The colonel drove rapidly to Charley Hastrom's house.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

NEGOTIATIONS.

THE little trip of Colonel Withers occurred on the night of the election.

When the party at Delmonico's broke up, Jonas was delightfully full, if such a qualification can be predicated of such a condition; so Charley took his new colonel in charge, and escorted him to his, Charley's home. Mrs. Becky was waiting for Charley, and, as soon as he saw that little lady, Jonas shouted: —

"Hurrah! Why don't you hurrah, Mrs. Hastrom? Why don't you hurrah, Charley?"

"Well, hurrah!" said Charley, "and now let me take you to bed."

So Charley saw Jonas safely in bed, and then returned to Mrs. Becky.

When Charley reached his room, Mrs. Becky looked quite mournful.

"Oh, don't be doleful, my dear," cried Charley, "it really couldn't have been helped."

"But I'm ashamed of you, Charley, for allowing Jonas to get in that condition."

"My dear," responded Charley, "all the saints, this side of heaven, couldn't have kept him straight to-night, and I must say that I can't blame him much, for we've done a big thing to-night."

"Then you succeeded?" asked Mrs. Becky.

"Fully," said Charley.

"And the colonel," said Mrs. Becky, "of the Nine Hundred and First is — "

"Upstairs, in bed," interrupted Charley.

"Tell me all about it," said Mrs. Becky.

So Charley told to her the events of the evening in as brief a manner as he could.

Hardly had he finished his recital when the door-bell rang. Charley hastened to the door, as the servants had retired, and confronted Colonel Withers, who shouted, rather than asked: —

"Where's Mr. Hastrom?"

Charley modestly suggested that he was that individual, and then, recognizing, in the darkness, Colonel Withers, he exclaimed: —

"My dear colonel, I'm delighted to see you. Come in."

Then he led him into the sitting-room, where Mrs. Becky at once chimed in: —

"Why, colonel, I'm pleased to see you here; you have always treated us as strangers before."

The colonel simply glared at them. He was enraged, terribly enraged. He had been prepared to humiliate himself, but he had not been prepared to find so many difficulties thrown in the way of his unpleasant task. Waiting at the house where Jonas boarded had not improved his temper, and on the way to Charley's house he had almost lashed himself into fury. He did not notice the salutations of Charley and Mrs. Becky, but jerked out: —

"Where's Mr. Smith?"

Charley winked at his wife, so that she might follow his lead.

"Ah, poor fellow," sighed Charley; "he's in bed!"

Mrs. Becky sighed profoundly.

"Sick?" asked the colonel, now somewhat frightened.

"Out of his head," replied Charley, dolefully.

"What makes you think so?" inquired the colonel, eagerly.

"His talk."

"Yes," added Mrs. Becky, "his queer remarks."

"What does he say?" asked the colonel, in surprise.

"Says he will never marry your daughter," said Mrs. Becky, solemnly.

"The deuce he won't!" interrupted the colonel.

"Until he's a colonel, which is the same thing, I suppose," added Charley.

"Until he's a colonel!" ejaculated Colonel Withers. "How can he become a colonel?"

"He's going to Egypt to serve in the Khedive's army," replied Charley.

"But I've come to ask him to marry my daughter now," said the colonel.

"Too late, my dear colonel," said Charley, winking at his wife. "He's very obstinate, and he's positively made up his mind that he will not marry your daughter until he has become a colonel."

"Unless he should die in the mean time," added Mrs. Becky, sighing heavily.

"Can I see him?" asked the colonel.

"Oh, dear no," said Mrs. Becky. "The doctor would not allow that."

"But he won't die?" urged the colonel.

"He's pretty sure to die," responded Charley, adding, for the sake of his conscience, *sotto voce*, "when his time comes."

"I'm an old fool," said the colonel. "I'll kill my daughter and her lover, too, with my nonsense."

"Ah!" sighed Mrs. Becky.

"We'll tell him what you say, in his first lucid interval," said Charley, in a solemn tone. "Perhaps that will be the means of his recovery."

"And what shall I say to Kitty?" asked the old colonel, as he dropped into a chair and buried his face in his hands. "Poor Kitty!" exclaimed he. "How she will hate her father!"

Mrs. Becky started forward, as if about to tell the colonel all about their plot. The sorrow of the old man had touched her heart, and she could not bear to see him go away so broken down. Charley, however, seized her wrist, and, stepping forward, placed his hand on the colonel's shoulder, and replied: —

"Tell her, colonel, what you have done to-night. She will love you then, whatever may happen. Tell her, also, that I have not the least doubt that, when Jonas is informed that he can marry Kitty, he will recover rapidly."

"But have you no doubt?" asked the colonel, eagerly.

"Not the slightest."

"I'll guarantee it, colonel," said Mrs. Becky, a tear shining in her eye.

"Thank you, sir," said the colonel, quite gently, as he pressed Charley's hand; "and you, too, madame. I'll tell Kitty what you say."

"And she'll get well at once, you can rest assured," said Charley.

Then the colonel left them, and drove to his home at a much slower rate of speed than that which he had adopted on his way down, much, no doubt, to the delight of his horse.

As soon as he had left the house, Mrs. Becky commenced to reproach Charley.

"Now, Charley," urged she, "you should have told him. See how he suffered."

"And he ought to suffer," responded Charley. "He made Jonas and his daughter miserable, and he ought to pay for that amusement. It's well enough as it stands, and let's to bed."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CHARLEY'S PLOT.

At the breakfast-table, on the following morning, Charley developed his plan of the campaign.

"Jonas," said he, "I suppose you will admit that you owe something to me for the success of our little game last night."

"I owe everything to you, Charley," replied Jonas.

"Well," inquired Charley, "is your gratitude extensive enough to enable you to consent to keep away from your charmer for three days?"

"I must do that, in any event, I suppose," replied Jonas.

"How do you propose to manage it?" asked Charley.

"Write to Colonel Withers, inform him that I am a colonel, and request him to allow me to enjoy once more the society of Kitty."

"Now, if I'll agree to have the whole thing arranged

within five days, will you allow me to manage the whole affair?"

"I'll be eternally obliged to you," replied Jonas.

"And you'll agree not to see Kitty or Colonel Withers during that time, and not to inform them of your promotion?"

"Certainly," replied Jonas.

"Remember," said Charley, "I have your promise, and now you had better stop at your tailor's, and order your uniform for the parade on Thursday. You must cut a decent figure there, or my reputation will be lost."

After Jonas had departed, Charley continued to develop his plot.

"Becky," said he, "get some pens, ink and paper."

"Why," said Mrs. Becky, "there they are in the writing-desk, in the other room."

"Well," said Charley, "let's go in there then, for I want you to write a letter."

Mrs. Becky sat down at the desk, and prepared herself to write at Charley's dictation.

"Are you ready?" asked he.

Mrs. Becky nodded her head, and Charley began: —

"My dear Kitty — "

Mrs. Becky looked up in astonishment.

"Well, but, Becky, you are writing it," said Charley.

"But who is to sign it?" asked she.

"Why, you, of course. You're her correspondent."

"Oh, very well," said Mrs. Becky, as she wrote, "My dear Kitty." — "I would visit you at your house," continued

he, "instead of writing to you, if it were possible; but the truth is that I must get my new bonnet ready for Sunday —"

"I won't write that," said Mrs. Becky.

"Why not?" inquired Charley.

"Because you know perfectly well that I never make my own hats."

"By Jove! so I do," exclaimed Charley.

"And do you suppose," continued Mrs. Becky, "that I am going to say to another woman that I do?"

"Well," said Charley, "that's a refinement of female human nature that I had not yet explored. However, there must be some excuse."

"Then invent a decent one," said Mrs. Becky.

"I suppose," said Charley, "we must put it on the help, as usual. Write, 'but the truth is, that the change of help is —'"

"But we have not changed," said Mrs. Becky.

"How the mischief is she to know that?" explained Charley. "She doesn't know anything about matrimonial affairs. Why, she didn't even know what a fellow ought to do on a honeymoon trip."

"Still she may find out," urged Mrs. Becky.

"My dear," said Charley, "you seldom go amiss when you presume on the ignorance of the people to whom you write. It is a lamentable fact, but the amount of ignorance which exists among the people to whom we send our letters is heart-rending. Now go on and add, 'I cannot leave the house. I particularly wish, however, that you would be on Union Square, in front of Tiffany's, on Thursday, at three o'clock —'"

"What for?" interrupted Mrs. Becky.

"The regiment parades there then," replied Charley, sententiously.

"And you mean —" asked Mrs. Becky.

"Exactly," replied Charley.

Mrs. Becky rubbed her hands in delight.

"You think it's a good plan, then?" asked Charley.

"It's capital," replied Mrs. Becky.

"Go on, then," said Charley, —"'with your father. Wait there for me at least half an hour; and, if a regiment should pass, notice it particularly, for I want you to tell me how you like Charley's new uniform. Now, don't fail to be there, with your father.' You can emphasize father," said Charley.

"Eh?" said Mrs. Becky.

"Draw a line under it," said Charley, walking up to Mrs. Becky, and looking over her shoulder. "Why, bless me!" continued he, "you have drawn a line under every word except the conjunctions."

"That's exactly as all women write," said Mrs. Becky.

"How the mischief do you call attention to anything important then?" asked Charley.

"Put it in a postscript," said Mrs. Becky.

"Well," said Charley, "add 'J. S. particularly wishes this.'"

"Is that all?" asked Mrs. Becky.

"Of course," replied Charley. "That last sentence will do the work. You can rely on that."

So the letter was signed and sealed, and Charley took it to post.

Charley chuckled all day over the little plot which he had worked out in his head, and was full of it when he returned home in the afternoon.

"I tell you, Becky," said he, at dinner, "we'll get lots of fun out of this little game. How the colonel will open his eyes!"

"But what am I to do?" asked Becky.

"Well, my dear," responded Charley, "you will prepare a particularly good dinner, for I have noticed that when lovers come out of the despairing mood they are particularly hungry. It seems as if they were endeavoring to make up for lost time. You can rely upon it that Miss Kitty and Jonas will make your larder suffer on that occasion."

"Is that all?" asked Mrs. Becky; "because I have a vague idea that I would have known enough to have done that without instructions?"

"By no means," said Charley. "You must then go up to Union Square, take the colonel and his daughter prisoners, and bring them here."

"And you?" asked Mrs. Becky.

"I'll take care to bring in a prisoner with me; and now the plan of the campaign is marked out."

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

On the morning following the day on which he had visited the Hastroms, the colonel was in a much more cheerful frame of mind than he had been for some days. He had performed his unpleasant work, and yet had not been compelled to meet Colonel Smith, as he still called him in his mind. He had told the Hastroms of the change in his intentions, and they would tell Jonas, so that, when he met the latter gentleman, the edge of the thing would have been taken off. Naturally then he felt cheerful, and, when Kitty entered the dining-room, he greeted her quite gayly. Kitty, however, was too listless to feel or express any astonishment, and so she sat down to the breakfast-table after merely saying "Good-morning."

"By the way, Kitty," said the colonel, "I called on one of your friends yesterday."

"Did you, papa?" asked she, languidly.

"Oh, well," said he, with pretended indifference, "if you don't care to hear about my call, I won't worry you with the details of it."

"Go on, papa, if you wish," said she, smiling.

"Oh, there's nothing more of it," answered he, "except that I called on one of your particular friends."

"Who was it, papa?" asked she, willing to humor him.

"Mr. Jonas Smith."

"What, papa?" inquired she, quite roused from her listlessness, "you called on —"

"Mr. Jonas Smith," interrupted he.

"But, papa!"

"Oh, I know," interrupted the colonel, "that I gave him some particular information, not long ago; but, then, you see Kitty, I've changed my mind."

"O papa!" cried she, springing up and clasping her arms around his neck, "and now —"

"And now," added the colonel, "he can marry you as soon as he pleases, that is to say, as soon as he can."

"But how did he look, and what did he say, when you told him?" urged Kitty.

"Ah, yes. How did he look? By the way, though, Kitty, I didn't see him," responded the colonel, in some confusion.

"Didn't see him?"

"No."

"But, papa, I thought you told him that —"

"Oh, I told the Hastroms to tell him. The truth is, he was slightly indisposed, — a little under the weather."

"Then I ought to go to him at once," said Kitty.

"Oh, no," said the colonel. "There's no necessity for that; he'll probably be up here to-morrow. In the mean time, I'll drop down and see him."

"Now you are my good father again," cried Kitty, as she kissed him heartily.

"Did Kitty suppose, then, that I'd refuse her anything, that she wanted so badly?"

"It looked like it, papa."

"Ahem! Ah, yes, perhaps it did; but then, looks are very deceitful. And now you'll be my old Kitty onee more?"

"Oh, won't I, papa?"

About noon, at the urgent solicitation of Kitty, the colonel went down town and called on Mrs. Hastrom. That lady steered very near the edge of the truth in order to save Charley's plot. However, she assured the colonel that Jonas was very much improved, infinitely better than he had been on the previous evening, and that she thought that, by Thursday or Friday, he would be able to go out. Of course she insisted that he could not be seen just then.

It was fortunate for Charley's plot that Colonel Withers did not take it into his head to call at the boarding-place of Jonas; but, as the colonel had found Jonas at Charley's house and had been informed that he was confined to his bed there, he supposed of course that Jonas was still there.

The colonel reported the good news at home, and found Kitty a changed girl. She went about the house singing once more. Looking after the household became once more a pleasure, instead of a burden, and she met her father with the old, gay light in her eyes, and the old, bright words on her lips.

"Well," mused the colonel, "who would have thought it? Why, the girl's metamorphosed! She must be terribly fond

of Smith, if the loss of him can work such a change in her. I wonder if I was in that sort of a boat when I was young. I suppose I must have been, I suppose I must have been."

During the afternoon Kitty received the mysterious letter which had been concocted at the Hastrom mansion. It was certainly incomprehensible to her, but, just as Charley had said, when she read the cabalistic words, "J. S. wishes it," she resolved to carry out the instructions contained in the letter. She fancied that it was a pleasant surprise for her, planned by Mrs. Hastrom, and that that lady intended in some way to bring her and Jonas together.

Of course, after having been deprived for so long a time of the pleasure of Jonas' society, Kitty would have liked very much to have seen him; but still women are patient and long-suffering, and, as on the following day, she received a note from Mrs. Hastrom, in which she was informed that Jonas was up and would call on her certainly by Friday, she kept up her spirits amazingly.

"Papa," said she, on that day, "will you take me to town to-morrow afternoon?"

"Why, of course," responded the colonel; "where do you wish to go?"

"To Union Square, to see the Nine Hundred and First parade," responded she.

"I shall not object to that sight myself," said the colonel, delighted to find that Kitty was once more taking an interest in the things that were going on around her; "and that will be a good opportunity to call on Mrs. Hastrom and inquire about Jonas."

Kitty looked her thanks.

It was rather a cruel trick that Charley was playing on Jonas. Had Jonas dreamed for a moment that Colonel Withers had removed his injunction, he would have flown to Kitty's side. As it was, however, he kept his promise to Charley, and looked forward to the coming Thursday as a day which was to end his misery in some shape or other, though Charley had not explained his plot to him sufficiently to enable him to foresee the real happiness that was in store for him on that auspicious occasion.

If the reader has followed the foregoing statements with any care, he must have observed that the interest of this story is centred in the coming Thursday, and that all the persons who have been introduced herein are looking forward to that day eagerly.

The Nine Hundred and First, as the day of its annual parade.

Jonas Smith, as the day, which, somehow or other, was to unite him once more to the woman of his heart.

Kitty Withers, as the day on which she was to see, or at least be under the same roof with, Jonas.

Charley Hastrom, as the day for the development of his plot.

Colonel Withers, as the day which was to reinaugurate in Kitty an interest in things of this world.

And Mrs. Becky, as the day which was to witness the crowning specimens of her skill in the culinary art.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE VERITABLE COLONEL SMITH.

MEANWHILE, the gallant Nine Hundred and First was making great preparation for the parade. It was quite important that it should be a successful one, for two reasons: first, they were for the first time to exhibit their new uniforms; and, second, a regiment from Connecticut had lately paraded down Broadway, and had almost shaken the throne of the Nine Hundred and First. The members of the regiment were somewhat afraid that their new colonel would not do them much honor; yet, as the lieutenant-colonel promised to keep his eyes open, and to give Jonas such hints as might be necessary, they hoped that they would get through the day successfully. Jonas, however, was resolved that the regiment should not suffer through his neglect, and so he devoted all his time to his new office, and, with the aid of Charley and the lieutenant-colonel, he crammed himself as well as he could for the occasion.

At length the important Thursday arrived. The day was a delightful one, just such a day as one would select for a parade. It was just warm enough to save the soldiers from the necessity of carrying their overcoats, and yet not so

warm as to make marching unpleasant; a light breeze was blowing, and the streets were uncommonly clean. The members of the regiment were in fine spirits, and everything betokened a successful parade.

Jonas looked grand. He was a fine, big, manly fellow; his uniform fitted him admirably; he was mounted on a black horse, of high spirits and fine appearance, and, as he was a capital rider, he quite impressed his subordinates. When the regiment was ready to start, Jonas dashed along their flank and placed himself at their head. The lines were dressed, and then Jonas gave the word of command. As they started, Charley said to Jonas, "I say, colonel, keep your eyes open at Union Square."

What a sight a regiment parading down the avenue is! Stretching from curb to curb an unbroken line of men, so true in movement of body and of foot as to seem almost mechanical, and marching grandly down, as if there was nothing that could terrify them, a regiment is a glorious sight. No wonder that the uniform finds its way at once to bright maidens' hearts. I, who have been oft deprived of a fair one's company by means of a set of brass buttons swooping down upon her and carrying her off, admit that it is not to be wondered at. If I were a maiden fair myself, I really believe that I should strike my flag at once to the first pair of epaulettes that did me the honor to sit down before my heart.

To a lively air the regiment paraded down Fifth Avenue to Twenty-third Street, and thence down Broadway to Union Square. Jonas did not know what Charley meant by his

hint, but you may be sure that he kept his eyes wide open, and he saw Kitty and her father standing on the sidewalk. Jonas raised his hat gravely, as if responding to a cheer which had then greeted the regiment from the houses; but his eyes met those of Kitty, and she knew that the salute was intended solely for her.

"Papa," exclaimed she, "look there!"

"Well," replied he, good-naturedly, "I am looking."

"But see their colonel, papa."

"He does look familiar," said he, as he put on his glasses. "By Jove, Kitty, it's Jonas Smith!"

"Yes, papa," replied she, smiling up in his face.

"The clever rogue!" chuckled the colonel.

"Yes, papa," assented Kitty, promptly.

"And I needn't have troubled myself, it seems, to offer you to him."

"Apparently not, papa; for now he's a real colonel, and you can't object."

"By Jove, Kitty," said the colonel, "our friend, the colonel, must be awfully fond of you."

"Thank you, papa," replied she, demurely.

"And he deserves you, Kitty."

"I always thought so, papa."

"You mean I didn't?"

Kitty shook her head affirmatively as she laughed at him.

"Well, well," said the colonel, "we are all liable to make mistakes, and I have repented."

"You couldn't conveniently turn around and notice a

friend, could you, colonel?" asked a person who was standing behind Colonel Withers.

The colonel turned around and greeted Mrs. Hastrom, and Kitty also shook hands with her heartily.

"Did you see the regiment?" asked Mrs. Hastrom.

"Yes," replied Kitty, promptly.

Now the truth is that she couldn't have told whether a regiment or a company had passed by; in fact, it's doubtful whether she saw more than one man.

"And did you see my husband?" asked Mrs. Becky.

"No," replied Kitty, slowly.

"Well," said Mrs. Becky, laughing, "under the circumstances I forgive you; and now you must both of you come right home and dine with me, and see Charley there."

"Oh, by the way, colonel," added she, turning to Colonel Withers, "perhaps you object to meeting Colonel Smith."

"Not a bit," said the colonel. "Do we, Kitty?"

"Not a bit," replied she, gayly.

"Well, then, come right along," added Mrs. Hastrom; "for if there is anything that Charley and Colonel Smith dislike, it is a cold dinner, though they will be late."

"And I quite agree with them," said Colonel Withers; "so hurry us as much as you please."

So the colonel and his daughter went home with Mrs. Hastrom, and there awaited the return of the bold soldier boys. Mrs. Hastrom kept her eye on the cook, Kitty gave some of her old-time songs in the parlor, and the colonel went to the library and amused himself with the books and engravings.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

TRUE LOVE DOES RUN SMOOTH.

In due time Charley returned home, bringing with him the new colonel. Charley had received his instructions in the morning from Mrs. Becky, and so, as he passed along, he shunted off Jonas, as it were, into the parlor, and went on to the dining-room himself. Thus the meeting of the two lovers was witnessed only by themselves. They had a thousand things to tell each other, and they mingled their information with so many endearing expressions, and kisses, and embraces, that they got along very slowly, though probably quite satisfactorily. Mrs. Hastrom gave them as much time as she could, but presently the inexorable dinner demanded their presence.

Finally Mrs. Hastrom, followed by Charley and Colonel Withers, entered the parlor. They found Jonas and Kitty sitting hand in hand, and gazing fondly on each other.

"Could you take a short adjournment for dinner?" inquired Mrs. Hastrom.

"Especially as we are short of spoons," added Charley.

Then Colonel Withers chimed in: —

"I'm delighted to see you, Colonel Smith," and shook hands heartily with Jonas.

"Then you withdraw your objections?" asked Jonas.

"You've compelled me to do so," responded the colonel. "It was a clever trick, my boy; and, by and by, we'll drink a bumper to Colonel Jonas Smith."

And they did drink a bumper to Colonel Jonas Smith, and had a very merry dinner. The old colonel was in high good-humor, and Kitty and Jonas had quite recovered their spirits. It is needless to say that Charley was in his element. The bad jokes that were got off at that dinner-table would have made Joe Miller's hair stand on end, if he could have been resuscitated; the atrocious puns that were perpetrated would have startled even Lord Dundreary himself; yet those people enjoyed themselves hugely.

What an evening they passed afterwards! Jonas always looked upon it as the happiest night of his life. Kitty was in high spirits, and sang as merrily as a lark. Even the old colonel joined in the mirth most heartily, and was so engrossed in amusing himself that he forgot that he was keeping unconscionable hours. Finally, however, after he had kept his carriage waiting at the door more than an hour, he insisted upon going home. But even then Jonas could not bear to part from Kitty, and he begged the colonel to give him a seat in his carriage, for a part of the way, at least.

"All the way, my boy, if you wish," responded the colonel, heartily. "I haven't treated you very well, and I'm willing to make up for that, if I can."

So Jonas rode home with Kitty, and, as the colonel fell asleep almost as soon as they had rolled off of the stones, Jonas and Kitty had a very pleasant chat. When they

reached Kitty's home, the colonel urged Jonas to stay all night, but Jonas refused.

"Well," said the colonel, "I'll send the man back with you."

"No," said Jonas, "I'm going to walk."

"What," exclaimed the colonel, "all the way?"

"Yes," responded Jonas. "This is the happiest night of my life, and I want to think it out."

"And make some good resolutions for the future, I suppose," said the colonel.

"I hope so," said Jonas.

And so, after a good-night to Kitty, Jonas departed.

Jonas took up his old-time position in the house once more, and Kitty was perfectly happy. Lovers proverbially find happiness in the merest bagatelles, and Jonas and Kitty in nowise differed from other lovers. The slightest pleasure enjoyed in each other's society became enhanced tenfold. Just as an experiment — I tell you this in the utmost confidence — I am going some time or other to fall head-over-ears in love, that is, if I can find any charming young female who will assist me in the business. Alas! that, in order to do so, I must dye the gray hairs that will struggle in among my black ones, and must assume the airs of youth. Nevertheless, in the cause of science — if there be such a thing as a science of love — I have resolved to sacrifice myself, and, when I have sufficiently recovered, I'll write for you, my dear reader, a new "*confessio amantis.*"

One day, when Jonas was at the house, the colonel was particularly jocular.

"Look here, colonel," said he, "aren't you tolerably tired of playing lover?"

"Certainly not," responded Jonas.

"Nor you, Kitty, of having a lover?"

"Not unless you intend to impose Lieutenant Mackenzie upon me," responded Kitty, gayly.

"That reminds me," said the colonel; "I must call on the major. Well," continued he, "I'm tired of having you play lovers, and I insist upon your being married at once."

"The sooner the better," said Jonas, laughing.

"What do you say to that, Kitty?" asked her father.

"Whenever Jonas wishes," replied she, placing her hand in that of Jonas.

"All right," said the colonel; "then I'll take command, and I direct that Colonel Jonas Smith take charge of the fortress, Kitty Withers, on Wednesday, the 25th instant."

"Three weeks!" gasped Kitty. "I don't believe I can get ready, papa."

"As the Mahommedans say, 'What is written, is written.' The general orders have been given, and no one can disobey them under the penalty —"

"Of what?" asked Jonas.

"Of having the wedding postponed for a year," solemnly replied the colonel.

"Kitty!" said Jonas, looking at her eagerly.

"Oh, I'll try," responded she hastily, "and I've no doubt that I can get ready."

"I thought," muttered the colonel, as he turned away, "that that sort of punishment would settle the business."

Then he chuckled immensely, during the rest of the day, over the way in which he had put it.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE COLONEL VISITS THE MAJOR.

When the colonel had taken that memorable ride to the residence of Jonas, one of his most painful reflections had been what the major would think about it. Only a short time before he had announced boldly to the major that, under no circumstances, would he permit his daughter to marry a civilian; and there he was, on his way to beg a civilian to marry his daughter. The worst of it was that he knew that the major, under the same circumstances, would have acted differently. The major would have kept his resolution, if the girl had died. And what jokes, gibes, and unpleasant remarks the major would make at his expense! All these thoughts passed through the colonel's mind during that memorable ride, and made him decidedly uncomfortable. However, the colonel resolved that he would avoid the major, and thus escape explanations. To be sure, that would be unpleasant for the colonel; but then, what else could he do under the circumstances?

Now, however, the colonel was jubilant. There was no necessity for hiding his head in shame in the major's presence. His daughter was to marry the man she loved, and that man was not a civilian. So delighted was the colonel with the present condition of affairs, that he resolved one morning to go down town and call upon the major.

"Kitty," said he, "have you any message for the major?"

"No," replied she, somewhat astonished.

"What, no message; nor for his nephew?"

"Certainly not," replied she.

"Well, after your treatment of them on their last visit," said the colonel, "you really ought to send them some cheerful word."

"Oh, you can take them my forgiveness," replied Kitty, as she went out of the room.

The colonel laughed heartily and departed.

The major was in his office; but he was not in a proper state of mind to receive visitors. Evidently something had gone wrong with him, and his temper, not of the best at any time, was in a fearful state on that day.

"How are you, major?" asked the colonel, cheerfully.

"How are you?" grunted the major.

"Why, major, what ails you?"

"Everything," responded the major, gruffly.

"And our nephew?" asked the colonel.

"D—n my nephew!" cried the major. "That's what ails me, that's all that ails me."

"Why, what has he done?" inquired the colonel, in surprise.

"Done!" cried the major. "He's done everything that he hadn't ought to. I took him into the business, and he set out to ruin me."

"Oh, the ignorance of youth," commented the colonel.

"Youth be hanged!" exclaimed the major. "Youth be blowed! It isn't very ignorant, nor very youthful, for a fellow to issue the paper of the firm to the extent of five thousand dollars, and then go off and lose every dollar of the money at faro."

"What a pity!" said the colonel; "and he a Mackenzie!"

"That's the devil of it," interrupted the major. "If he'd been a Smith, or a Brown, I'd have sent him to jail; but I can't send a Mackenzie there."

"It's precious lucky that I didn't let him marry my daughter, after all," muttered, rather than spoke, the colonel.

"Well, she might have done worse," said the major, sharply. "How is the girl?"

"Oh, she's all right now," responded the colonel, gayly.

"Well, I told you so," said the major.

"And she's engaged to be married to a colonel," said the colonel, chuckling as he let out his information.

"What!" almost shouted the major; "another colonel?"

"No," responded the colonel; "it's the same man, only he has become a colonel."

"Of what?" asked the major, eagerly.

"Of the Nine Hundred and First," responded the colonel, calmly.

"Oh, in the militia," said the major, in a most sarcastic and aggravating tone.

"Well, what of that?" asked the colonel, hastily, somewhat irritated.

"Oh, it's better than nothing," said the major, still in his sarcastic tone. "It's just better than nothing."

"Sir," said the colonel, in great heat, "it's good enough for me."

"Oh, of course," said the major. "We all praise our own chickens."

"Well, sir," said the colonel, now thoroughly roused, "he's better than a Mackenzie, who plays faro with some one else's money."

"Sir!" cried the major, springing up and assuming a defiant attitude.

"Sir yourself," said the colonel, swelling out his chest, and looking over the head of his opponent.

"You'll hear from me, sir," said the major; "you'll hear from me."

"Very well, sir," responded the colonel, as he left the office with much dignity.

Two old friends had quarelled about a matter which was certainly not of the slightest personal interest to either of them.

Now the colonel had not gone half a mile before he was sorry that he had been betrayed into such hasty expressions. Major Mackenzie was his oldest friend, and was suffering from the irritation consequent upon one of the most unpleasant of difficulties, a family trouble. The colonel felt that, instead of adding to that irritation, he ought, as a friend, to have aided the major in bearing his troubles. By the time

the colonel had reached his home he was decidedly uncomfortable.

The major was a hot-tempered, but uncommonly good-hearted, old fellow. He was decidedly fond of the colonel, and, as soon as his heat had subsided, felt that he should have congratulated the colonel upon the good fortune of his daughter, rather than have made it a means of breeding unpleasantness between old friends. He felt very sorry for what he had done, but his honor was pledged to call him out, and call him out he must, if he should break all the laws ever invented.

Fortunately, when the colonel reached his home, he found Jonas there, and fortunately he determined to select that gentleman for his second. Accordingly he detailed to Jonas the events of the day, just as they had occurred. Jonas listened patiently until the old gentleman had finished, and then he said at once: —

"Now, colonel, this won't do. I am not going to have my wedding-day spoiled by a quarrel between two old friends. I am going to the major at once, and I am going to tell him that you are sorry for what you said."

"If he is, Jonas; but, if he insists upon fighting, I shall not back out, you understand."

So Jonas went to the major. He found that gentleman still at his office. The major glared at Jonas, as he entered and saluted him.

"Now, major," said Jonas, "it isn't fair for you and the colonel to quarrel about me, when my wedding-day is so

near at hand. The colonel is quite heart-broken about your quarrel."

"So am I, then," said the major, bluntly.

"And is very sorry that he said anything unpleasant to you."

"So am I," responded the major; "that I said anything unpleasant to him."

"That's as it should be," said Jonas. "The courage of both of you is too well established to be doubted. The colonel is anxious to make up your old friendship."

"So am I," said the major, "and I'll apologize, if the colonel asks it."

"Oh, no," said Jonas, "only I want you to dance at my wedding."

"I'll do that," said the major, "if you send me an invitation."

"You can rely on that," said Jonas.

Then Jonas was about to depart when the major came up to him, took his hand, shook it heartily, and remarked: —

"Colonel Smith, you may be in the militia, but you're a devilish good fellow."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

SHALL HE RESIGN?

THE colonel had not been informed as to the details of the election of Jonas as colonel of the Nine Hundred and First. All he knew was that Jonas was the colonel, and Jonas looked forward to the time when he must tell the colonel how he, Jonas, had been elected, without much pleasure. However, told it must be, and he selected one evening when Charley and his wife were visiting Kitty, as the opportunity, hoping that Charley would be of some assistance to him.

"Colonel Withers," said Jonas, jumping at once into the water, "on next Tuesday I resign my position as colonel of the Nine Hundred and First."

"Resign!" exclaimed the colonel, quite dumfounded.

"Yes," replied Jonas. "One week from to-day I must resign, and become an ex-colonel."

"Well," said the colonel, as soon as he had somewhat recovered from his astonishment, "I'm opposed to that performance. However, we'll call a council of war on the subject."

So the colonel announced to the assembled party the

proposition which Jonas had stated, and then asked them for their opinions.

"Now, Kitty," said he, "what do you think?"

"I'm sure," replied she, "that it makes no difference to me whether Jonas *is* or *is not* a colonel. He can resign, if he wishes; but he need not do so, on my account. If he thinks he ought to resign, so do I."

Jonas looked his thanks.

Mark the inconsistency of womankind! A few months ago that girl would have agreed to any proposition put forward by her father, and now she was opposing her parent, and agreeing with a young gentleman, without the faintest shadow of a reason.

The colonel was somewhat nonplussed by his daughter's speech, and so he turned to Mrs. Becky, and asked for her opinion.

"Well," replied that little woman, "Jonas makes a very good colonel, for I've heard Charley say so" — (woman again!) — "and I think he should remain."

"So do I," said the colonel. "So we'll consider it settled, and say no more about it."

That was the colonel's idea of a council of war.

Jonas, however, took a different view of the matter, and, on that very evening, he penned and forwarded a formal resignation.

Now any one who supposes that I propose to dismiss the Nine Hundred and First in a cavalier fashion is very much mistaken. I am not that kind of man. Why, look you, what should we have done without the Nine Hundred and

First? To be sure, Jonas might have married Kitty; but the colonel would have been unhappy, and that would have made Kitty unhappy, and that would have made Jonas unhappy. So you see the Nine Hundred and First has been too important an adjunct to this story to be dismissed without at least a good-by.

Well, the evening when the regiment was again to meet was at hand. The officers were all assembled in the armory, when Jonas entered. As soon as the meeting had been called to order, Jonas rose and said: —

"GENTLEMEN, — We are all aware that this meeting has been called to select a presiding officer for this regiment. One month ago you did me a favor, which I never can repay, and for which I thank you, from the bottom of my heart. I have, in accordance with the arrangement then made, already sent in a formal resignation; but I could not refrain from coming here personally, and thanking you, which I do most heartily, for your kindness to me. Hoping that your regiment will have all the success it deserves, I respectfully tender my resignation as colonel of the gallant Nine Hundred and First."

Then Jonas left the room and located himself in one of the company rooms, in order that he might say good-by to the officers after they had finished their important business.

"Look here, gentlemen," said Harry Bromley, the leader of the outsiders, after Jonas had left the room, "I am, for one, quite satisfied with our present colonel. He made a fine appearance on our annual parade, and did the regiment credit, and, besides that, he is a whole-souled fellow. I think

we'd better keep a good leader, now that we've got one. I, for one, shall vote for him. What do you say, Charley?" asked he, turning to Charley Hastrom.

"Nothing," replied Charley. "When I asked you last month to do me a great favor, you did it like clever fellows, and I don't propose to increase my obligations. Whoever is satisfactory to the rest of you will suit me. Of course, as Colonel Smith is my friend, if he is to be a candidate, I shall vote for him."

"Well," said the lieutenant-colonel, "I think it's an uncommonly good suggestion, and I nominate Jonas Smith for colonel of this regiment."

"And I second the nomination," added Harry Bromley.

The preliminaries for the election were speedily arranged, and all proceeded to vote. Strange as it may appear, when the ballots were counted, they all bore the name of Jonas Smith. Again he had been unanimously elected colonel of the Nine Hundred and First. Of course he was immediately brought out of the room in which he had ensconced himself, and of course, notwithstanding his protests, he was compelled to accept the position, which he finally did in a neat little speech, which brought down the house.

"I say, Jonas," said Charley, as they left the armory, "how this will delight the colonel!"

"To tell you the truth," responded Jonas, "that is the chief reason why I accepted."

CHAPTER XL.

WE DANCE AT THE WEDDING.

On the day following the election, when Jonas met the colonel, he saluted him very abruptly, with the remark: —

"Well, colonel, I resigned last night."

The colonel looked at him as if he had gone crazy.

"Resigned!" gasped the colonel.

"Yes," replied Jonas. "I told you I should."

"But I thought we arranged that you should not resign."

"I didn't agree to it, though," responded Jonas, "and so last night I resigned."

"But they re-elected him, papa," said Kitty.

"Of course," said the colonel, immensely relieved. "I knew they would."

Then the colonel insisted that he would give one of his little dinners, to which he would invite every officer of the Nine Hundred and First.

"Oh, no, papa," said Kitty. "You know —."

"Well, I know what, puss?" asked the colonel.

"You know that I — that we —"

"That we are to be married next week," added Jonas, helping her out of her difficulty.

"Yes," responded the colonel.

"And wouldn't it be nicer," asked she, "to — to — "

"Invite them to the wedding?" supplemented Jonas.

"A capital idea," said the colonel; "so get to work at once."

Then there was an uproar in the house. The establishment was filled with tulle and raisins, and silks and citron, and satins and sugar, and cakes and wines, and ribbons and jellies. (I am not at all sure that I have not mixed up those articles in inextricable confusion; however, how can you expect the uneducated male to know anything about wedding arrangements? He dons his dress suit, marches down the aisle of the church, gets married, and goes home to the feast, recking naught of the days of labor which have been given over to preparations. Before I sat down to write this chapter, I endeavored to find out what is *en règle* under such circumstances, and, for that purpose, called upon a fascinating young damsel of my acquaintance. The ignorant servant-maid bounced me into the parlor, where I found the light turned down so low that I could hardly see anything. I did, however, discover two animate objects, springing to opposite ends of the sofa. On inspection they turned out to be my charming young friend and a decidedly handsome young man. Disgusted at myself, I could only mutter that I had merely dropped in to find out the time of day, and then retire. As I left the door I unconsciously whistled the wedding march. That must be my excuse for not being more specific as to details.)

You can rest assured, however, that all the foregoing

matters did not prevent Kitty from finding time to devote to Jonas. A woman is so strangely constituted that, if the idol of her heart should murmur, "Come sit by my side, little darling," when she was engaged in reading the latest fashion book, she would immediately leave her engrossing *duties*, and place herself so close to his side, that you would imagine that a new pair of Siamese twins had been discovered. Alas for us for whom all that bliss is ended, and alas, and alas, for those, who have never experienced it!

"'Tis better to have loved and — got married,
Than never to have loved at all."

I frankly confess that I have a very strong desire to halt right here, and deliver a brief moral essay to the reader upon the vanity and foolishness of marrying; but what would be the use? Did you ever know anybody who was converted by argument? Nay, I think not. No more did I. I'm in favor of falling in love, and, if people allow that delightful pleasure to submerge itself in matrimony, why, I suppose they would go on doing that, though every married man in the land rose up and warned them. Well, go on, youngsters, go on. *Experentia docet.*

The wedding came off duly on the day which had been fixed by the colonel. Major Mackenzie came, in accordance with his promise. When the two veterans met, each stretched out his hand.

"Major," said the colonel.

"Colonel," said the major.

Their hands clasped together, and their peace was made.

Of course, Charley and Mrs. Becky were on hand, renewing, as Charley said, their youthful experiences.

"And, my boy," said Charley to Jonas, "if you want any information on the honeymoon business, I'm your man. You see I've been through the mill, and 'I know how it is myself.' The honeymoon's your strong card. You can get them to promise anything while that lasts."

"And after that?" asked Jonas, laughing.

"They'll keep the promises, if they like," responded Charley; "and generally they don't like."

"Well, never mind, Charley," said Jonas; "Kitty and I will not disagree about promises."

"The rashness of inexperience," muttered Charley as Jonas left him; "how it fools even a sensible man!"

I know I ought to describe the ceremony and the parties to it, but you really must be satisfied, when I tell you that Kitty was the daintiest and loveliest of brides, and Jonas the most manly of bridegrooms. What more could I say if I tried? Isn't that the very quintessence of praise?

You can be sure that the officers of the Nine Hundred and First were present in full uniform at the wedding, and that they heartily cheered Jonas and his bride. In fact, as the carriage containing Jonas and Kitty rolled out of the gateway, they burst into one enthusiastic shout, of which the burden was: —

"Hurrah for Colonel Jonas Smith!"

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